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THE HOMILIST.

CONDUCTED BY THE

REV. DAVID THOMAS.

VOL. VI.



"I KNOW WELL I OUGHT NOT TO HAVE ANY DESIGN FOR MYSELF, WHICH ADMITS NOT OF SUBORDINATION TO THE INTEREST AND HONOUR OF THE GREAT GOD AND MY REDEEMER, AND WHICH IS NOT ACTUALLY SO SUBORDINATED."

JOHN HOWE.

FOURTH THOUSAND.

LONDON :

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PREFACE.

IN presenting the SIXTH VOLUME of the "*Homilist*" to the public, the Editor is happy to say, that the circulation has been gradually increasing from the beginning ; and he trusts that the work has been improving in merit. It has won enthusiastic friends amongst the most learned and thoughtful teachers in all churches. He cannot better describe this volume, than by quoting the preface to the former ones.

First : The book has *no finish*. The Editor had not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the *design*. Their incompleteness is *intentional*. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly ;—but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and to polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the Biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented "germs" which, if sown in good soil, under a free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

Secondly : The book has *no denominationalism* : it has no special reference to "*our* body," or to "*our* church." As denominational strength is not necessarily *soul* strength, nor denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of the "*Homilist*" to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man as a citizen of the universe, not as the limb of a sect.

Thirdly : The book has *no polemical theology*. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the *cardinal* doctrines which constitute what is called the

“orthodox creed”—has, nevertheless, the deep, and ever-deepening conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed, or that man requires; and that no theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great book of God; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but means to an end. *Spiritual morality is that end.* Consequently to the heart and life every Biblical thought and idea should be directed. Your systems of divinity the Author will not disparage; but his impression is, that they can no more answer the purpose of the Gospel, than *pneumatics* can answer the purpose of the atmosphere. In the case of Christianity, as well as the air, the world can live without its scientific truths; but it must have the free flowings of their vital elements. Coleridge has well said, “Too soon did the doctors of the Church forget that the heart—the moral nature—was the beginning and the end, and that truth, knowledge, and insight were comprehended in its expansion.”

The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all churches, who have so earnestly rallied round him, to the many who have encouraged him by their letters, and to those, especially, who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the “last day” prove that the help rendered has been worthily bestowed; and that the “*Homilist*” did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavors to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the every-day life of man!

DAVID THOMAS.

Loughborough Park.

CONTENTS.

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All the articles in the Volumes are written by the Editor, with the exception of those which have their Authors' names attached to them.

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HOMILIES.

	PAGE
The Odium Theologicum, the Worst of Social Devils	1
Journalism and the Pulpit	73
What Hinders the Gospel? The Question answered	157
Solitude Recommended to the Pastor. (Translated from the French of A. VINET by J. Powell.)	229
Gospel Theology	301
The Bible as a Grand Moral Painting	373

—————

THE GENIUS OF THE GOSPEL.

The Method of Saving Souls; or, The Laws of an Evangelical Mission	13
The Issues and Encouragements of an Evangelical Mission	92
John the Baptist; or, Phases of Moral Worth	170
Children in the Market Place; or, the Two Sides of Truth: and the Two Sides of Human Life	252
Mighty Works; or, Diversity in the External Spiritual Advan- tages of Mankind	314
The Wise, the Prudent, and the Babes; or, The Hidden and Revealed	319
Invitation to the Heavy Laden; or, The Spirit of Christianity	326
Well-doing is Sabbath Keeping	383

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

	PAGE
One, and only One Probation, a Benevolent Arrangement .	25
David and Mephibosheth ; a Faint Image of God and the World	29
The Grave in the Garden	33
The Want of the World, and the Way of Supplying it .	35
Present Forbearance no Argument against future Retribution, (By J. H. RYLAND.)	38
Nature an Auxiliary to the Gospel. (By GEORGE S. INGRAM.) .	45
The Mental History of Conversion	50
The Blessedness of the True	54
Time, a Property	55
The Tears of Deity over the Impenitence of Man. (By EVAN LEWIS, B.A.)	104
Christ's Way of Dealing with Bigotry. (By ANDREW BOWDEN.)	109
The Conquest of Self the greatest Victory. (By J. HUGHES.)	111
Man	118
God and His Universe	120
David's Lament over Absalom ; or, The Tears of Parental Love	122
The two-fold Function of Personal Christianity	124
David and Goliath,—True Spirit, the Pledge of Victory in the Battle of Life	126
The Third Utterance of Christ on the Cross. (By T. THOMAS.)	131
God in the Moral Restoration of Man	177
Moral Childhood ; or, Christ's answer to the Ambitious . .	181
The Records of Life. (By JAMES SPENCE, D.D.)	186
The True in Life	190
The Spiritual Significance of the Universe. (By JOSEPH PARKER.)	195
Goodness and Severity in the Manifestation of God. (By T. LEVI.)	196
Unbelief ; Irrational, Inconsistent, and Criminal. (By M.) .	199
The Spiritual Aspects of Spring	203
The Unwrought Purposes of the Heart.	207
God's Ways Unsearchable. (By W. BEALBY.)	259
Fallen Humanity Elected to Redemption in Preference to Fallen Angels	264
The Relation of Christ to the Religious Feeling of Humanity .	272

	PAGE
Divine Forgiveness	276
Eden; or, God's Voice to Man on his Entering his Earthly Sphere of Life	278
The Educational Temples; or, Christianity a School	280
The Devout Soul and Nature. (By L. L. B.)	283
Elijah in the Cave	285
The Ark; a Word to Parents	287
The Moral Characteristic; or, The One Determining Element of Character	333
Calmness in Death; its Philosophy	337
The Wants of Man, and the Supplies of God	341
The Infinitude of the Divine Resources. (By J. PARKER.)	345
The Darkest Picture in Human History; or, the Extremity of Anguish	348
The Character of Genuine Reformers. (By B. EVANS.)	350
Secrets, and the Revelation of them. (By CHARLES SHORT, M.A.)	352
Spiritual Ignorance the Cause of Immense Evil, and the Occasion of Immense Good	354
Persecution for the Right. (By S. T. A.)	356
The Good Man's Estimate of Life. (By J. H. HILL.)	360
God's Notice of Little Things. (By J. PARKER.)	395
The Two Brothers; or Earthly Relationship the Medium of Spiritual Influence. (By B. DALE, B.A.)	399
Gospel Truth	402
The Spiritual Infirmities of Man, and the Agency of God. (By G. W. HUMPHREYS, B.A.)	410
The Scene of Our Saviour's Execution. (By J. F.)	415
The Cry for Vengeance Rebuked	418
The Benevolence of Christ's Mission	423
Spiritual and Material Relationship	428
The Power of the Tongue. (By JOHN SIBREE.)	432

DOGMAS TESTED BY REASON AND SCRIPTURE.

(By W. C.)

Introductory	57
The Magic Book	136

OLD STANDARDS AND NEW; OR, GENUINE AND SHAM ORTHODOXY.

	PAGE
John Owen (By W. C.)	59
Richard Hooker "	141
John Howe "	209
Bishop Pearson "	287

STARS OF CHRISTENDOM.

Tertullian (By W. C.)	63
Athanasius "	145, 363
Gregory of Nyssa "	434

LITERARY NOTICES.

Form of Freedom; Five Colloquies or Liturgies	68
The Earnest Minister. William Wordsworth	69
Gethsemane, and other Poems	70
The National Review. &c., &c.	71
The Hulsean Lectures for the Year 1856. The Preaching of Christ	149
Mediæval Philosophy, &c.	151
Psalms, Hymns, and Passages of Scripture for Christian Worship	152
Memoirs of James Hutton. Saving Truths. The Body, Mind, and Spirit; or, The Life of Nature, of Reason, and of Heaven	153
Use and Abuse; or, Right and Wrong in the Relations to Labor, Capital, Machinery and Land. Essays by William Bathgate.	
Ladies of the Reformation. &c., &c.	154
The Annotated Paragraph Bible; a Companion to the Authorized Version of the New Testament	220
The Will, Divine and Human	222

	PAGE
Help to Truth Seekers. The Christian Cosmos. Christ the Christian's God and Saviour	223
Christian Experience in its Several Parts and Stages. On Preach- ing and Preachers, &c.	224
Glimpses of Prophet Life. The Seven Churches of Asia. Dr. Livingston—His Life and Adventures. Independency in Warwickshire	225
Memorials of a Good Man's Life. &c., &c.	226
The Biographical History of Philosophy. Quiet Hours	293
A Manual of Religion, &c.	295
The Shekinah. David, King of Israel. Christ in the Wilderness. Light from the Cross	296
An Analytical Concordance of the Holy Scriptures	297
The Unsealed Prophecy. On Education in its Constituents, Objects, and Issues	298
The Great Sermons of the Great Preachers; or, the Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence of all Ages and Countries. Evenings with Jesus. &c., &c.	299
The Sabbath made for Man	367
The Rev. Micaiah Hill, reviewed by John Calvin	368
A Treatise on the Will. Analytical Exposition of the Romans . .	369
The Apocalypse of St. John. The Apocalypse Opened	370
The Coronet and the Cross. The New Dance of Death, and other Poems. &c., &c.	371
Systematic Theology	438
On the Light of Nature	440
India's Grievances and England's Duty	442
Come Home. Expository Discourses on the Book of Exodus. The Fourth Utterance on the Cross; or, the Spiritual Suffer- ings of our Lord	443
The Rest of Heaven : an Incentive to Work on Earth. &c., &c. .	444

INDEX OF TEXTS.

Book	Chap.	Verse	Page	Book	Chap.	Verse	Page
Gen.	2	16—17	278	Luke	5	16	229
Gen.	4	9	399	Luke	9	54—56	418
Gen.	7	1	287	Luke	12	2	352
Josh.	24	26—27	283	Luke	13	24	109
Judges	1	19	157	Luke	15	2	356
Judges	2	6—10	118	Luke	16	26	25
1 Sam.	17	45	126	Luke	19	37—40	272
1 Sam.	23	16	190	Luke	19	41	104
2 Sam.	9	1—13	29	Luke	23	33	415
2 Sam.	18	33	122	Luke	23	42—43	131
1 Kings	8	18—19	207	John	1	42	399
1 Kings	19	9—14	285	John	2	10	345
Psa.	77	19	259	John	5	35	350
Psa.	104	24—30	193	John	5	39	186
Psa.	104	30	203	John	10	10	423
Prov.	9	1—6	280	John	19	41—42	33
Prov.	16	32	111	Acts	13	38—39	276
Prov.	18	21	432	Acts	26	28	402
Eccles.	8	11	38	Rom.	1	18	157
Isa.	38	11	25	Rom.	6	5—6	124
Isa.	42	4	35	Rom.	8	18	360
Hosea	2	21—23	120	Rom.	8	32	341
Matt.	10	5—42	13	Rom.	8	26	410
Matt.	10	42	92	Rom.	8	29—30	177
Matt.	10	42	395	Rom.	11	22	196
Matt.	11	1—15	170	1 Cor.	2	8—9	354
Matt.	11	16—20	252	Gal.	1	15—17	50
Matt.	11	20—24	314	Eph.	5	16	55
Matt.	11	25—27	319	Phil.	3	20—21	54
Matt.	11	28—30	326	Col.	1	16	45
Matt.	12	1—13	383	1 Tim.	6	4—5	1
Matt.	12	46—50	428	2 Tim.	2	16	1
Matt.	13	25	73	2 Tim.	4	6, 7, 8,	337
Matt.	18	1—6	181	Heb.	2	16	264
Mark	3	31—35	428	Heb.	6	10	395
Mark	6	6	199	Heb.	9	13—14	301
Mark	9	41	395	1 Pet.	1	9—13	373
Mark	10	21	333	Rev.	9	6	348



A HOMILY

ON

The Odium Theologicum, the Worst of Social Devils ;

OR, THE CONTROVERSIES OF A MERE CONVENTIONAL THEOLOGY A
DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN DEPRAVITY.*

“Shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness;”—“whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth,” &c. 2 Tim. ii. 16; 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5.

ERE we enter on a subject which the destiny of the hour has forced on our attention, we would render our devotest gratitude to that ALL-MERCIFUL Spirit, who permits us to witness the dawn of another year, and to commence this, the sixth volume of our Homilistic labours. Ebenezer! We would greet you, indulgent reader, with hearty gratulations and kindest wishes. May this new year reproduce to you the best of the past, herald the brightest of the future, and supply you with delightful memories in the coming ages of your being! We ask you to invoke for us the illumination of that Spirit, which searcheth into “the deep things of God” so that the light reflected on our pages may be the “light of life,” shedding an ever-brightening radiance on writer and reader as months and years flow on! On approaching my subject, I shall premise four things.

* This Homily was written in 1857, at the time that a disreputable Theological Controversy was disturbing the peace of the Churches.

First : *I have no disposition to underrate the importance of right beliefs in religion.* All intelligent actions are resolvable into beliefs. Brutes act from blind impulse, man from motives ; and motives imply beliefs. All moral character is built upon, and ever modified by, beliefs. To change a man's character you must change his beliefs, and to make his character right, you must give him right beliefs. To make a man a philosopher, you must give him philosophic beliefs ; to make him a Calvinist, you must give him Calvinistic beliefs ; to make him a Mormonite, you must give him Mormonitish beliefs ; to make him a Christian, you must give him Christian beliefs. When Paul said to the Philippian gaoler, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,*" his direction was not founded on an arbitrary arrangement, but on a philosophical necessity. No man can have a true Christian character—can be "saved"—without faith in Christ. I disclaim all sympathy with the spirit of those would-be spiritualists who speak contemptuously of beliefs, and denounce all creeds. I have a creed. "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth : and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate : was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost ; the holy Catholic Church ; the communion of saints ; the forgiveness of sins ; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen." These beliefs, whether the "apostles' creed" or not, I hold not as dogmas, but feel as convictions. Though long ages roll between me and the unknown author of this formula, I venerate the hand that drew it up ; I accept the utterance as the embodiment of my own beliefs. Most of them appear to me *essential* to the formation of a Christian character. I hold them as the redemptive and Christ-mould-

ing forces of humanity. I have no language to express the importance I attach to them, as an exponent of the Divine in the Bible, and as the corrective of the wrong in man.

Secondly : *I hold it to be the right of every man to endeavor to propagate his beliefs.* I find no fault with men in proclaiming, expounding, defending, and respectfully urging, their convictions on the attention of others. This is natural. By a law of man's social constitution, he is impelled to this, where the beliefs relate to the interests of others. There are some convictions we get which "we cannot but speak ;"—"necessity is laid upon us." They are like the fire in the prophet's bones : they burn for expression. A deep conviction will always create its evangelist.

Thirdly : *I recognise the value of a rightly conducted theological controversy.* I am no opponent to a righteous controversy—a controversy where both parties, free from the love of victory and the spirit of arrogance, are humble, docile, and devout enquirers after truth ; where each presents his idea, not as a postulate, but as a suggestion, not to be necessarily received, but to be thoroughly searched. Such a controversy sharpens intellect, evolves erudition and genius, elicits truth, and brings souls together.

Fourthly : *The controversy of which I have to speak is that of a conventional theology.* By a conventional theology I mean a theology which a man has received from others, rather than reached by his own research ; a theology which has been put into his memory as a class of propositions, rather than wrought out of his soul as spiritual convictions ; a theology which is rather the manufacture of other men, than the growth of individual reflection and experience ; a theology which is more concerned about grammar than grace—symbol than sense—sign than substance.

Now, such controversies, in the nature of the case, must always be marked by two features :—(1.) *Technicality.* A conventional theologian cannot recognise an idea under any form of expression but that in which it was conveyed to his memory at first ; and unless the identical term is employed,

he will not recognise it. It may be there, in bounding energy, under a new garb—perhaps more fit for the work of the time—but he sees it not. He disputes its existence, wages a battle of words against it, and seeks to slay as heretics all who speak not his dialect. (2.) *Personality*. In the controversies of a theology instinct with the true, devout, and scientific spirit, all personalities will always be eschewed. The point at issue between the disputants is detached from all personal relations, brought out, by mutual consent and mutual good-will, into an abstract form, and searched in the broad light of reason and revelation. Each disputant, with a sage and saintly spirit, feels that his belief, if not true, is better destroyed than saved; and if true, the more thoroughly scrutinized the better. He knows that true ideas get power and grandeur the longer they are in the sun. But in the case of a mere conventional theology, the controversy abounds with personalities. The dogma, having been received by tradition, and cherished without any intelligent appreciation of the evidences of its truth, is a tender thing to its possessor. Anything said against it, he regards as being said against himself;—the man who assails his dogma, he regards as his enemy. Real truth, wherever it exists, is felt to be the property of *universal* man, and it can be discussed without personalities; but dogmas are only the felt property of the *individuals* who hold them, and if they are touched they excite personal opposition. Truth is the sun, dogma is the rushlight. The one belongs to humanity, the other to persons; and a contention about *personal* property will always excite *personal* feelings. Men may fight about rushlights, but who will fight about suns?

Such is the kind of controversy, if we mistake not, which has been greatly interesting, for some months, a certain sort of believers amongst us. Some of them call it the “great controversy.” Great indeed! We confess that we have been unable to see anything great in it. From the beginning it has appeared to us contemptibly small. When men meet with mutual respect for each other, with a mutual conviction of their

errableness, and with a mutual desire to search out truth ; to test the worth of each other's opinions, for each other's weal ; to ring each other's ideas, in order to see if the coin is good ; we can see something great. Such controversies we should like to originate in every church. But when we see, in the holy name of truth, A seeking to prove B a heretic, and B, in his turn, endeavouring to prove A a rogue ; and the spectators, instead of sagely laughing at their folly, catching the furor, and joining in the fray, disgracing the so-called "religious press" with their "babblings," the scene yields us little else than grief and contempt.

Why, then, do I notice such controversies now ? For the same reason as I should notice race-courses, gambling-rooms, theatres, wars, and such like abominations, as the development of depravity. Because, as teachers of religion, we are not to be ignorant of that moral corruption which afflicts the race, we must not fail to mark its symptoms. Because we are not to be ignorant of "the devices" of Satan, we must not fail to track his foul footsteps. We question whether there is anything in society that opens more thoroughly the noxious fountains of depravity, brings out more the devil, than these controversies of a conventional theology. Is the devil the less devil because he puts on the garb of sanctity, speaks in the Bible dialect, and professes to do so from love to souls and truth ? No ; he is worse in the borrowed robes of priests than in his own sable habiliments. "Vain babblings," says Paul, "will increase unto more UNGODLINESS." How ?

I. SUCH CONTROVERSIES DEVELOP THE MOST IMPIOUS ARROGANCY. He who would see arrogance in its highest degree and most hideous forms, need not go to secular offices, filled by ambitious men, "dressed in a little brief authority," nor to thrones of proud and irresponsible despots. Let him go to the chair of St. Peter's ; and let him see a miserable mortal assuming infallibility, and daring to sit in the place of God ; or let him go to some Antinomian chapel, and hear some poor ignorant creature, in the sacred name of Heaven, fulminating

his vulgar denunciations on all who adopt not the crude dogmas of his narrow and ill-digested creed ; or let him go to the chair of that scribe who is penning allegations of heresy against some brother, who has expressed ideas that square not with the notions of his own little soul. Talk of arrogance ! All the arrogance of mere worldly men pales into dimness in the glare of the arrogance which that man displays who dares pronounce a brother heretic because he subscribes not to his own views. "Who art thou," says Paul, "that judgest another man's servant ? to his own master he standeth or falleth." Aye, who art thou that seekest dominion over thy brother's faith ? Has the whole realm of truth been opened to thee ? Does thine intellect see all verities in their true relations ? Are thy notions the "measure of all truth" ? Presumptuous mortal ! thou hast not learnt the first lesson of self-knowledge ;—thou dost not "know thyself," nor thy place in the universe, which is to "enquire in the temple," not to dictate and denounce.

There is reason to believe, from Scripture, that arrogance or pride was the first sin. "Pride," says the illustrious bard,

"Had cast him out from heaven, with all his host
Of rebel angels ; by whose aid aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers,
He trusted to have equalled the Most High,
If he oppos'd ; and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Raised impious war in heaven, and battle proud
With vain attempt."

"Raised impious war" ! Yes, arrogance has ever done this ; and never more so in Church or State than in theological controversies. In these the demon reigns and revels.

II. SUCH CONTROVERSIES DEVELOP THE MOST LAMENTABLE DISHONESTY. If dishonesty is a disposition to deceive and defraud, impose and cheat, I sincerely question whether the intrigues of courts, the chicaneries of markets, or the annals of larceny, will present specimens of the evil more grossly wicked than the history of such controversies. The polemic

of a mere scribe theology has ever been a cheat. First : *He cheats by the representation he makes of himself.* He would have his readers or hearers believe that he has reached the conclusions in debate by a thorough study *for himself* of the holy Book. It is false. It is a law that self-reached convictions expel dogmatism. The more thorough the student, the more diffident the speaker ; the more superficial the thought, the more flippant the tongue ; the more untutored the judgment, the more oracular the speech. The sciolist can arrogantly dictate, the student can only diffidently suggest. He who has thoroughly studied the Bible—studied it inductively and devoutly, wrestled in agony with its difficulties, and caught a glance of its unearthly glories—will shrink from the chair of the Rabbi ; will consider himself, like Paul, the least of all saints,—not the judge of all doctrine ; will implore Heaven to “help his unbelief,” rather than to aspire to any dominion over his brother’s faith. But the polemic of a mere scribe-theology cheats also by representing himself as being inspired only in the controversy *by love for truth.* It is not love for truth ; it is love for his own opinions. Opinions are not necessarily truths any more than botanical propositions are trees. Very different is the influence which the love of truth has upon the soul, to that which the love of our opinion has. The difference, in the effect upon the mind and manners, is as great as that which is produced by the love of natural objects, and the love of our own artistic productions. The man who stands before the beautiful in nature, with his soul inspired with love, will be humble, genial, devout ; but he who stands admiring his own little artistic productions will grow conceited, pettish, and envious. It is so in relation to the love of *universal* truth, and the love of our *individual* opinions. He who has caught a glance of truth, and felt the fire of its love, becomes self-oblivious and divinely kind ; but he who sees nothing but his own little notions, and loves only them, becomes an arrogant dogmatist and heartless persecutor. It is not love

for truth that leads a man to assail my beliefs; it is love for his own notions;—and when he says it is love for truth, he aggravates the offence, by adding falsehood to insolence. Moreover, he cheats by representing himself as thoroughly believing in the doctrines he contends for. When urging with vehemence his own views, he would impress you with the conviction that he himself has strong faith in them. But this is false. A man who has real faith in his principles never gets frightened when they are questioned, or savage with him who questions, or even with him who rejects. If the human mind is ruled by laws, it must be ever true that “he that believeth will never make haste.” The stronger a man’s faith in a truth, the more calm he is when it is assailed, and the more magnanimous he is with its assailant. It is not your men who have firmly-rooted convictions in the truth of their creed that raise the cry of heresy against their brethren, and are ever deprecating the importation of the new. The most feverish sticklers for orthodoxy, I trow, are at heart the weakest believers. The soul that has a firm and living faith in her theology, will be to heretical thoughts, even in their most violent form, as the moon to the ocean in the fiercest battles of her billows: she will look calmly down, and with majestic silence move on her way.

Secondly: *He is dishonest in his representation of his opponents.* He imputes motives not felt—ideas and conclusions not held. He seeks to cheat him of his reputation, to brand him as a heretic, and to evoke against him the reprobation of his age.

Are we, then, wrong in saying that controversies of this order develop the most lamentable specimens of dishonesty?—most lamentable, not only because the spirit is as bad as when developed in the most fraudulent transactions of the world, but being in the sacred name of truth and religion, its enormity is increased a thousandfold.

III. SUCH CONTROVERSIES DEVELOP A MOST DISASTROUS PERVERSITY. If perversity is the wrong use of things, a misap-

appropriation of blessings, then the conventional controversialist is pre-eminently guilty of this. *He perverts the Bible—the powers of the intellect, and the zeal of the heart.* Does he not pervert the Bible? For what use is revelation given? Is it not to impress rightly the heart, out of which are “the issues of life?” But he employs it to battle with men’s ideas. Is it not to reflect the divine glory? But he uses it to reflect his own opinions. Is it not to bind human souls together in sympathies of wonder at its mysteries, moral concurrence with its principles, and adoring thankfulness for its merciful provisions? But he uses it to divide the human family into speculative factions. Is it not to religionize the soul? But he uses it to harass man’s intellect and irritate his heart. Surely if the Almighty intended His book to be formulated into some system of thought that would be equally suited to the intellectual conformation of all men, he would have given it to us in that form Himself, and not left it to puny man, who is “of yesterday, and knows nothing” to make the vain attempt. Does he not pervert his *intellectual powers*? What is the use of intellect in relation to the Bible? Is it not to evolve its spiritual meaning, apply that meaning, first, to inspire and govern his own daily life, and then to make that meaning evident, impressive, and transforming to others? But instead of using his intellect for these purposes, he employs it to throw the Bible into logical propositions, and then to contend for these propositions as if they were the Bible. Instead of endeavouring to get “the incorruptible seed” of life out of the field of revelation, in order to lodge it in well-prepared hearts, his aim is to put that seed into the dry shell of his own technicalities. Instead of spreading out the Bible as a rich pasture for a hungry world, he spreads it out as an arena for mental gladiators. Instead of plucking from the Biblical fields the “rose of Sharon,” and “the lily of the valley,” and presenting them to men fresh with the tints and fragrance and dew of life, he plucks these celestial flowers to analyze them with his logic, and exhibit only to men their chemical elements, which have neither beauty nor sweetness,

but which are an offence to every sense. Does he not, moreover, pervert the *zeal of his heart*,—that divine fire which is put into the human soul, in order to impel the intellectual powers, and without which the intellect would no more move than the locomotive without steam? This precious force, given to stimulate man to battle against moral wrong, to promote the progress of humanity and the glory of God. Does not our polemic use to find out heretics, and to hunt them down; to trumpet his own orthodoxy, and to spread his own opinions?

Now, if perversity is a sin, the greater the blessings perverted the greater the sin. What boons has kind Heaven vouchsafed to man greater than the BIBLE, INTELLECT, and ZEAL?—the first the charter to eternal life, the second the eye to read it, and the third the impulse to make it his own. Man cannot dispense with either of these blessings. Each is indispensable to give value to the other. Destroy either, and the value of the three is gone. What is the Bible without intellect? A sun without an eye. What is intellect without the Bible? An eye without the sun. What is zeal without intellect? Blind impulse. What is intellect without zeal? An imperative machine. Who is a greater sinner than he who perverts these? He who turns to wrong use every production and element of nature, is innocent compared with such an one.

IV. SUCH CONTROVERSIES DEVELOP THE MOST HEARTLESS INHUMANITY. It blinds the polemic to the excellences of others. The supposed speculative errors of his opponent not only cloud from him every moral virtue, but are magnified into such crimes, that he rises to his view as a monster. It was the theological errors which the rabbinical theologues of the age imputed to Christ that hid from their eyes His celestial virtues, and made him appear a blasphemous criminal too enormous to be tolerated. The technical theologue who looks at a brother through the medium of his own orthodoxy, will fraternize with a modern scoundrel if he is

orthodox ; but, like Caiaphas of old, will rend his robes with pious horror at incarnate virtue if it conform not to his own views. What inhumanities have not been perpetrated in the name of orthodoxy ! The views of a brother have been misrepresented, his motives maligned, his feelings wounded, his position in society degraded, his reputation, dearer than his life, tarnished and rendered offensive. Our blood tingles in the fingers that hold this pen, when we remember the deeds of cruelty that this orthodox *animus* has perpetrated. What built the inquisition ?—What kindled the flames of martyrdom ?—What animated Bonner ?—What inspired Laud ?—What prompted Calvin to murder Servetus ?—What roused the Jewish Rabbis to put the Son of God to death ? I confess to a mysterious horror of the men who pride themselves in their orthodoxy.

The remarks made will suffice to justify our proposition that the controversies of a mere conventional theology are the most effective means of developing depravity. In all seriousness, we say, that if a man asked us to give him the worst specimen of depravity, we do not know that, amidst the aboundings of sin, we could take him to a better place for the purpose than the scene of such controversies.

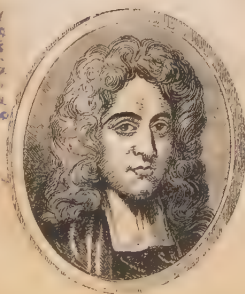
We must conclude our ungrateful task. To you who dare to sit in judgment upon your brothers' faith, and become their accusers, I would suggest whether you cannot spend your short day of probation in a more honorable and useful way. It may be *easier* work to contend against theological opinions, which you consider erroneous, than to struggle against the moral evils, pride, materialism, worldliness, and such like—which are the very soul of speculative error, which crowd your own neighborhood, and perhaps swarm in your own heart. But which, I ask, is the most important, the most consistent, the most befitting erring mortals like ourselves ? O ye technical theologizers—theologasters—who, like your Jewish prototypes, tithe the “mint, and anise, and cummin” of theological thought, and neglect the weightier matters of moral truth and spiritual feeling, What is your

THE HOMILIST.

CONDUCTED BY THE

REV. DAVID THOMAS.

VOL. VI.



"I KNOW WELL I OUGHT NOT TO HAVE ANY DESIGN FOR MYSELF, WHICH ADMITS NOT OF SUBORDINATION TO THE INTEREST AND HONOUR OF THE GREAT GOD AND MY REDEEMER, AND WHICH IS NOT ACTUALLY SO SUBORDINATED."

JOHN HOWE.

FOURTH THOUSAND.

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P R E F A C E.

IN presenting the SIXTH VOLUME of the "*Homilist*" to the public, the Editor is happy to say, that the circulation has been gradually increasing from the beginning ; and he trusts that the work has been improving in merit. It has won enthusiastic friends amongst the most learned and thoughtful teachers in all churches. He cannot better describe this volume, than by quoting the preface to the former ones.

First : The book has *no finish*. The Editor had not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the *design*. Their incompleteness is *intentional*. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly ;—but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and to polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the Biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented "germs" which, if sown in good soil, under a free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

Secondly : The book has *no denominationalism* : it has no special reference to "*our* body," or to "*our* church." As denominational strength is not necessarily *soul* strength, nor denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of the "*Homilist*" to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man as a citizen of the universe, not as the limb of a sect.

Thirdly : The book has *no polemical theology*. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the *cardinal* doctrines which constitute what is called the

“orthodox creed”—has, nevertheless, the deep, and ever-deepening conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed, or that man requires ; and that no theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great book of God ; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but means to an end. *Spiritual morality is that end.* Consequently to the *heart* and *life* every Biblical thought and idea should be directed. Your systems of divinity the Author will not disparage ; but his impression is, that they can no more answer the purpose of the Gospel, than *pneumatics* can answer the purpose of the atmosphere. In the case of Christianity, as well as the air, the world can live without its scientific truths ; but it must have the free flowings of their vital elements. Coleridge has well said, “Too soon did the doctors of the Church forget that the heart—the moral nature—was the beginning and the end, and that truth, knowledge, and insight were comprehended in its expansion.”

The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all churches, who have so earnestly rallied round him, to the many who have encouraged him by their letters, and to those, especially, who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the “last day” prove that the help rendered has been worthily bestowed ; and that the “*Homilist*” did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavors to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the every-day life of man !

DAVID THOMAS.

Loughborough Park.

CONTENTS.

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All the articles in the Volumes are written by the Editor, with the exception
of those which have their Authors' names attached to them.

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HOMILIES.

	PAGE
The Odium Theologicum, the Worst of Social Devils	1
Journalism and the Pulpit	73
What Hinders the Gospel? The Question answered	157
Solitude Recommended to the Pastor. (Translated from the French of A. VINET by J. Powell.)	229
Gospel Theology	301
The Bible as a Grand Moral Painting	373

THE GENIUS OF THE GOSPEL.

The Method of Saving Souls; or, The Laws of an Evangelical Mission	13
The Issues and Encouragements of an Evangelical Mission	92
John the Baptist; or, Phases of Moral Worth	170
Children in the Market Place; or, the Two Sides of Truth: and the Two Sides of Human Life	252
Mighty Works; or, Diversity in the External Spiritual Advan- tages of Mankind	314
The Wise, the Prudent, and the Babes; or, The Hidden and Revealed	319
Invitation to the Heavy Laden; or, The Spirit of Christianity	326
Well-doing is Sabbath Keeping	383

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

	PAGE
One, and only One Probation, a Benevolent Arrangement	25
David and Mephibosheth; a Faint Image of God and the World	29
The Grave in the Garden	33
The Want of the World, and the Way of Supplying it	35
Present Forbearance no Argument against future Retribution, (By J. H. RYLANCE.)	38
Nature an Auxiliary to the Gospel. (By GEORGE S. INGRAM.)	45
The Mental History of Conversion	50
The Blessedness of the True	54
Time, a Property	55
The Tears of Deity over the Impenitence of Man. (By EVAN LEWIS, B.A.)	104
Christ's Way of Dealing with Bigotry. (By ANDREW BOWDEN.)	109
The Conquest of Self the greatest Victory. (By J. HUGHES.)	111
Man	118
God and His Universe	120
David's Lament over Absalom; or, The Tears of Parental Love	122
The two-fold Function of Personal Christianity	124
David and Goliath,—True Spirit, the Pledge of Victory in the Battle of Life	126
The Third Utterance of Christ on the Cross. (By T. THOMAS.)	131
God in the Moral Restoration of Man	177
Moral Childhood; or, Christ's answer to the Ambitious	181
The Records of Life. (By JAMES SPENCE, D.D.)	186
The True in Life	190
The Spiritual Significance of the Universe. (By JOSEPH PARKER.)	195
Goodness and Severity in the Manifestation of God. (By T. LEVI.)	196
Unbelief; Irrational, Inconsistent, and Criminal. (By M.)	199
The Spiritual Aspects of Spring	203
The Unwrought Purposes of the Heart	207
God's Ways Unsearchable (By W. BEALBY.)	259
Fallen Humanity Elected to Redemption in Preference to Fallen Angels	264
The Relation of Christ to the Religious Feeling of Humanity	272

	PAGE
Divine Forgiveness	276
Eden; or, God's Voice to Man on his Entering his Earthly Sphere of Life	278
The Educational Temples; or, Christianity a School	280
The Devout Soul and Nature. (By L. L. B.)	283
Elijah in the Cave	285
The Ark; a Word to Parents	287
The Moral Characteristic; or, The One Determining Element of Character	333
Calmness in Death; its Philosophy	337
The Wants of Man, and the Supplies of God	341
The Infinitude of the Divine Resources. (By J. PARKER.)	345
The Darkest Picture in Human History; or, the Extremity of Anguish	348
The Character of Genuine Reformers. (By B. EVANS.)	350
Secrets, and the Revelation of them. (By CHARLES SHORT, M.A.)	352
Spiritual Ignorance the Cause of Immense Evil, and the Occasion of Immense Good	354
Persecution for the Right. (By S. T. A.)	356
The Good Man's Estimate of Life. (By J. H. HILL.)	360
God's Notice of Little Things. (By J. PARKER.)	395
The Two Brothers; or Earthly Relationship the Medium of Spiritual Influence. (By B. DALE, B.A.)	399
Gospel Truth	402
The Spiritual Infirmities of Man, and the Agency of God. (By G. W. HUMPHREYS, B.A.)	410
The Scene of Our Saviour's Execution. (By J. F.)	415
The Cry for Vengeance Rebuked	418
The Benevolence of Christ's Mission	423
Spiritual and Material Relationship	428
The Power of the Tongue. (By JOHN SIBREE.)	432

DOGMAS TESTED BY REASON AND SCRIPTURE.

(By W. C.)

Introductory	57
The Magic Book	136

OLD STANDARDS AND NEW; OR, GENUINE AND SHAM ORTHODOXY.

	PAGE
John Owen (By W. C.)	59
Richard Hooker „	141
John Howe „	209
Bishop Pearson „	287

STARS OF CHRISTENDOM.

Tertullian (By W. C.)	63
Athanasius „	145, 363
Gregory of Nyssa „	434

LITERARY NOTICES.

Form of Freedom; Five Colloquies or Liturgies	68
The Earnest Minister. William Wordsworth	69
Gethsemane, and other Poems	70
The National Review. &c., &c.	71
The Hulsean Lectures for the Year 1856. The Preaching of Christ	149
Mediaeval Philosophy, &c.	151
Psalms, Hymns, and Passages of Scripture for Christian Worship	152
Memoirs of James Hutton. Saving Truths. The Body, Mind, and Spirit; or, The Life of Nature, of Reason, and of Heaven	153
Use and Abuse; or, Right and Wrong in the Relations to Labor, Capital, Machinery and Land. Essays by William Bathgate. Ladies of the Reformation. &c., &c.	154
The Annotated Paragraph Bible; a Companion to the Authorized Version of the New Testament	220
The Will, Divine and Human	222

	PAGE
Help to Truth Seekers. The Christian Cosmos. Christ the Christian's God and Saviour	223
Christian Experience in its Several Parts and Stages. On Preach- ing and Preachers, &c.	224
Glimpses of Prophet Life. The Seven Churches of Asia. Dr. Livingston—His Life and Adventures. Independency in Warwickshire	225
Memorials of a Good Man's Life. &c., &c.	226
The Biographical History of Philosophy. Quiet Hours	293
A Manual of Religion, &c.	295
The Shekinah. David, King of Israel. Christ in the Wilderness. Light from the Cross	296
An Analytical Concordance of the Holy Scriptures	297
The Unsealed Prophecy. On Education in its Constituents, Objects, and Issues	298
The Great Sermons of the Great Preachers; or, the Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence of all Ages and Countries. Evenings with Jesus. &c., &c.	299
The Sabbath made for Man	367
The Rev. Micaiah Hill, reviewed by John Calvin	368
A Treatise on the Will. Analytical Exposition of the Romans . .	369
The Apocalypse of St. John. The Apocalypse Opened	370
The Coronet and the Cross. The New Dance of Death, and other Poems. &c., &c.	371
Systematic Theology	438
On the Light of Nature	440
India's Grievances and England's Duty	442
Come Home. Expository Discourses on the Book of Exodus. The Fourth Utterance on the Cross; or, the Spiritual Suffer- ings of our Lord	443
The Rest of Heaven: an Incentive to Work on Earth. &c., &c. .	444

INDEX OF TEXTS.

Book	Chap.	Verse	Page	Book	Chap.	Verse	Page
Gen.	2	16—17	278	Luke	5	16	229
Gen.	4	9	399	Luke	9	54—56	418
Gen.	7	1	287	Luke	12	2	352
Josh.	24	26—27	283	Luke	13	24	109
Judges	1	19	157	Luke	15	2	356
Judges	2	6—10	118	Luke	16	26	25
1 Sam.	17	45	126	Luke	19	37—40	272
1 Sam.	23	16	190	Luke	19	41	104
2 Sam.	9	1—13	29	Luke	23	33	415
2 Sam.	18	33	122	Luke	23	42—43	131
1 Kings	8	18—19	207	John	1	42	399
1 Kings	19	9—14	285	John	2	10	345
Psa.	77	19	259	John	5	35	350
Psa.	104	24—30	193	John	5	39	186
Psa.	104	30	203	John	10	10	423
Prov.	9	1—6	280	John	19	41—42	33
Prov.	16	32	111	Acts	13	38—39	276
Prov.	18	21	432	Acts	26	28	402
Eccles.	8	11	38	Rom.	1	18	157
Isa.	38	11	25	Rom.	6	5—6	124
Isa.	42	4	35	Rom.	8	18	360
Hosea	2	21—23	120	Rom.	8	32	341
Matt.	10	5—42	13	Rom.	8	26	410
Matt.	10	42	92	Rom.	8	29—30	177
Matt.	10	42	395	Rom.	11	22	196
Matt.	11	1—15	170	1 Cor.	2	8—9	354
Matt.	11	16—20	252	Gal.	1	15—17	50
Matt.	11	20—24	314	Eph.	5	16	55
Matt.	11	25—27	319	Phil.	3	20—21	54
Matt.	11	28—30	326	Col.	1	16	45
Matt.	12	1—13	383	1 Tim.	6	4—5	1
Matt.	12	46—50	428	2 Tim.	2	16	1
Matt.	13	25	73	2 Tim.	4	6, 7, 8,	337
Matt.	18	1—6	181	Heb.	2	16	264
Mark	3	31—35	428	Heb.	6	10	395
Mark	6	6	199	Heb.	9	13—14	301
Mark	9	41	395	1 Pet.	1	9—13	373
Mark	10	21	333	Rev.	9	6	348



A HOMILY

ON

The Odium Theologicum, the Worst of Social Devils ;

OR, THE CONTROVERSIES OF A MERE CONVENTIONAL THEOLOGY A
DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN DEPRAVITY.*

“Shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness;”—“whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth,” &c. 2 Tim. ii. 16; 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5.

ERE we enter on a subject which the destiny of the hour has forced on our attention, we would render our devotest gratitude to that ALL-MERCIFUL Spirit, who permits us to witness the dawn of another year, and to commence this, the sixth volume of our Homilistic labours. Ebenezer! We would greet you, indulgent reader, with hearty congratulations and kindest wishes. May this new year reproduce to you the best of the past, herald the brightest of the future, and supply you with delightful memories in the coming ages of your being! We ask you to invoke for us the illumination of that Spirit, which searcheth into “the deep things of God” so that the light reflected on our pages may be the “light of life,” shedding an ever-brightening radiance on writer and reader as months and years flow on! On approaching my subject, I shall premise four things.

* This Homily was written in 1857, at the time that a disreputable Theological Controversy was disturbing the peace of the Churches.

First : *I have no disposition to underrate the importance of right beliefs in religion.* All intelligent actions are resolvable into beliefs. Brutes act from blind impulse, man from motives ; and motives imply beliefs. All moral character is built upon, and ever modified by, beliefs. To change a man's character you must change his beliefs, and to make his character right, you must give him right beliefs. To make a man a philosopher, you must give him philosophic beliefs ; to make him a Calvinist, you must give him Calvinistic beliefs ; to make him a Mormonite, you must give him Mormonitish beliefs ; to make him a Christian, you must give him Christian beliefs. When Paul said to the Philippian gaoler, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,*" his direction was not founded on an arbitrary arrangement, but on a philosophical necessity. No man can have a true Christian character—can be "saved"—without faith in Christ. I disclaim all sympathy with the spirit of those would-be spiritualists who speak contemptuously of beliefs, and denounce all creeds. I have a creed. "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth : and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate : was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost ; the holy Catholic Church ; the communion of saints ; the forgiveness of sins ; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen." These beliefs, whether the "apostles' creed" or not, I hold not as dogmas, but feel as convictions. Though long ages roll between me and the unknown author of this formula, I venerate the hand that drew it up ; I accept the utterance as the embodiment of my own beliefs. Most of them appear to me *essential* to the formation of a Christian character. I hold them as the redemptive and Christ-mould-

ing forces of humanity. I have no language to express the importance I attach to them, as an exponent of the Divine in the Bible, and as the corrective of the wrong in man.

Secondly : *I hold it to be the right of every man to endeavor to propagate his beliefs.* I find no fault with men in proclaiming, expounding, defending, and respectfully urging, their convictions on the attention of others. This is natural. By a law of man's social constitution, he is impelled to this, where the beliefs relate to the interests of others. There are some convictions we get which "we cannot but speak ;"—"necessity is laid upon us." They are like the fire in the prophet's bones : they burn for expression. A deep conviction will always create its evangelist.

Thirdly : *I recognise the value of a rightly conducted theological controversy.* I am no opponent to a righteous controversy—a controversy where both parties, free from the love of victory and the spirit of arrogance, are humble, docile, and devout enquirers after truth ; where each presents his idea, not as a postulate, but as a suggestion, not to be necessarily received, but to be thoroughly searched. Such a controversy sharpens intellect, evolves erudition and genius, elicits truth, and brings souls together.

Fourthly : *The controversy of which I have to speak is that of a conventional theology.* By a conventional theology I mean a theology which a man has received from others, rather than reached by his own research ; a theology which has been put into his memory as a class of propositions, rather than wrought out of his soul as spiritual convictions ; a theology which is rather the manufacture of other men, than the growth of individual reflection and experience ; a theology which is more concerned about grammar than grace—symbol than sense—sign than substance.

Now, such controversies, in the nature of the case, must always be marked by two features :—(1.) *Technicality.* A conventional theologian cannot recognise an idea under any form of expression but that in which it was conveyed to his memory at first ; and unless the identical term is employed,

he will not recognise it. It may be there, in bounding energy, under a new garb—perhaps more fit for the work of the time—but he sees it not. He disputes its existence, wages a battle of words against it, and seeks to slay as heretics all who speak not his dialect. (2.) *Personality*. In the controversies of a theology instinct with the true, devout, and scientific spirit, all personalities will always be eschewed. The point at issue between the disputants is detached from all personal relations, brought out, by mutual consent and mutual good-will, into an abstract form, and searched in the broad light of reason and revelation. Each disputant, with a sage and saintly spirit, feels that his belief, if not true, is better destroyed than saved; and if true, the more thoroughly scrutinized the better. He knows that true ideas get power and grandeur the longer they are in the sun. But in the case of a mere conventional theology, the controversy abounds with personalities. The dogma, having been received by tradition, and cherished without any intelligent appreciation of the evidences of its truth, is a tender thing to its possessor. Anything said against it, he regards as being said against himself;—the man who assails his dogma, he regards as his enemy. Real truth, wherever it exists, is felt to be the property of *universal* man, and it can be discussed without personalities; but dogmas are only the felt property of the *individuals* who hold them, and if they are touched they excite personal opposition. Truth is the sun, dogma is the rushlight. The one belongs to humanity, the other to persons; and a contention about *personal* property will always excite *personal* feelings. Men may fight about rushlights, but who will fight about suns?

Such is the kind of controversy, if we mistake not, which has been greatly interesting, for some months, a certain sort of believers amongst us. Some of them call it the “great controversy.” Great indeed! We confess that we have been unable to see anything great in it. From the beginning it has appeared to us contemptibly small. When men meet with mutual respect for each other, with a mutual conviction of their

errableness, and with a mutual desire to search out truth ; to test the worth of each other's opinions, for each other's weal ; to ring each other's ideas, in order to see if the coin is good ; we can see something great. Such controversies we should like to originate in every church. But when we see, in the holy name of truth, A seeking to prove B a heretic, and B, in his turn, endeavouring to prove A a rogue ; and the spectators, instead of sagely laughing at their folly, catching the furor, and joining in the fray, disgracing the so-called "religious press" with their "babblings," the scene yields us little else than grief and contempt.

Why, then, do I notice such controversies now ? For the same reason as I should notice race-courses, gambling-rooms, theatres, wars, and such like abominations, as the development of depravity. Because, as teachers of religion, we are not to be ignorant of that moral corruption which afflicts the race, we must not fail to mark its symptoms. Because we are not to be ignorant of "the devices" of Satan, we must not fail to track his foul footsteps. We question whether there is anything in society that opens more thoroughly the noxious fountains of depravity, brings out more the devil, than these controversies of a conventional theology. Is the devil the less devil because he puts on the garb of sanctity, speaks in the Bible dialect, and professes to do so from love to souls and truth ? No ; he is worse in the borrowed robes of priests than in his own sable habiliments. "Vain babblings," says Paul, "will increase unto more UNGODLINESS." How ?

I. SUCH CONTROVERSIES DEVELOP THE MOST IMPIOUS ARROGANCY. He who would see arrogance in its highest degree and most hideous forms, need not go to secular offices, filled by ambitious men, "dressed in a little brief authority," nor to thrones of proud and irresponsible despots. Let him go to the chair of St. Peter's ; and let him see a miserable mortal assuming infallibility, and daring to sit in the place of God ; or let him go to some Antinomian chapel, and hear some poor ignorant creature, in the sacred name of Heaven, fulminating

his vulgar denunciations on all who adopt not the crude dogmas of his narrow and ill-digested creed ; or let him go to the chair of that scribe who is penning allegations of heresy against some brother, who has expressed ideas that square not with the notions of his own little soul. Talk of arrogance ! All the arrogance of mere worldly men pales into dimness in the glare of the arrogance which that man displays who dares pronounce a brother heretic because he subscribes not to his own views. "Who art thou," says Paul, "that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." Aye, who art thou that seekest dominion over thy brother's faith? Has the whole realm of truth been opened to thee? Does thine intellect see all verities in their true relations? Are thy notions the "measure of all truth"? Presumptuous mortal ! thou hast not learnt the first lesson of self-knowledge ;—thou dost not "know thyself," nor thy place in the universe, which is to "enquire in the temple," not to dictate and dencounce.

There is reason to believe, from Scripture, that arrogance or pride was the first sin. "Pride," says the illustrious bard,

"Had cast him out from heaven, with all his host
Of rebel angels ; by whose aid aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers,
He trusted to have equalled the Most High,
If he oppos'd ; and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Raised impious war in heaven, and battle proud
With vain attempt."

"Raised impious war"! Yes, arrogance has ever done this ; and never more so in Church or State than in theological controversies. In these the demon reigns and revels.

II. SUCH CONTROVERSIES DEVELOP THE MOST LAMENTABLE DISHONESTY. If dishonesty is a disposition to deceive and defraud, impose and cheat, I sincerely question whether the intrigues of courts, the chicaneries of markets, or the annals of larceny, will present specimens of the evil more grossly wicked than the history of such controversies. The polemic

of a mere scribe theology has ever been a cheat. First : *He cheats by the representation he makes of himself.* He would have his readers or hearers believe that he has reached the conclusions in debate by a thorough study *for himself* of the holy Book. It is false. It is a law that self-reached convictions expel dogmatism. The more thorough the student, the more diffident the speaker ; the more superficial the thought, the more flippant the tongue ; the more untutored the judgment, the more oracular the speech. The sciolist can arrogantly dictate, the student can only diffidently suggest. He who has thoroughly studied the Bible—studied it inductively and devoutly, wrestled in agony with its difficulties, and caught a glance of its unearthly glories—will shrink from the chair of the Rabbi ; will consider himself, like Paul, the least of all saints,—not the judge of all doctrine ; will implore Heaven to “help his unbelief,” rather than to aspire to any dominion over his brother’s faith. But the polemic of a mere scribe-theology cheats also by representing himself as being inspired only in the controversy *by love for truth.* It is not love for truth ; it is love for his own opinions. Opinions are not necessarily truths any more than botanical propositions are trees. Very different is the influence which the love of truth has upon the soul, to that which the love of our opinion has. The difference, in the effect upon the mind and manners, is as great as that which is produced by the love of natural objects, and the love of our own artistic productions. The man who stands before the beautiful in nature, with his soul inspired with love, will be humble, genial, devout ; but he who stands admiring his own little artistic productions will grow conceited, pettish, and envious. It is so in relation to the love of *universal* truth, and the love of our *individual* opinions. He who has caught a glance of truth, and felt the fire of its love, becomes self-oblivious and divinely kind ; but he who sees nothing but his own little notions, and loves only them, becomes an arrogant dogmatist and heartless persecutor. It is not love

for truth that leads a man to assail my beliefs; it is love for his own notions;—and when he says it is love for truth, he aggravates the offence, by adding falsehood to insolence. Moreover, he cheats by representing himself as thoroughly believing in the doctrines he contends for. When urging with vehemence his own views, he would impress you with the conviction that he himself has strong faith in them. But this is false. A man who has real faith in his principles never gets frightened when they are questioned, or savage with him who questions, or even with him who rejects. If the human mind is ruled by laws, it must be ever true that “he that believeth will never make haste.” The stronger a man’s faith in a truth, the more calm he is when it is assailed, and the more magnanimous he is with its assailant. It is not your men who have firmly-rooted convictions in the truth of their creed that raise the cry of heresy against their brethren, and are ever deprecating the importation of the new. The most feverish sticklers for orthodoxy, I trow, are at heart the weakest believers. The soul that has a firm and living faith in her theology, will be to heretical thoughts, even in their most violent form, as the moon to the ocean in the fiercest battles of her billows: she will look calmly down, and with majestic silence move on her way.

Secondly: *He is dishonest in his representation of his opponents.* He imputes motives not felt—ideas and conclusions not held. He seeks to cheat him of his reputation, to brand him as a heretic, and to evoke against him the reprobation of his age.

Are we, then, wrong in saying that controversies of this order develop the most lamentable specimens of dishonesty?—most lamentable, not only because the spirit is as bad as when developed in the most fraudulent transactions of the world, but being in the sacred name of truth and religion, its enormity is increased a thousandfold.

III. SUCH CONTROVERSIES DEVELOP A MOST DISASTROUS PERVERSITY. If perversity is the wrong use of things, a misap-

appropriation of blessings, then the conventional controversialist is pre-eminently guilty of this. *He perverts the Bible—the powers of the intellect, and the zeal of the heart.* Does he not pervert the Bible? For what use is revelation given? Is it not to impress rightly the heart, out of which are “the issues of life?” But he employs it to battle with men’s ideas. Is it not to reflect the divine glory? But he uses it to reflect his own opinions. Is it not to bind human souls together in sympathies of wonder at its mysteries, moral concurrence with its principles, and adoring thankfulness for its merciful provisions? But he uses it to divide the human family into speculative factions. Is it not to religionize the soul? But he uses it to harass man’s intellect and irritate his heart. Surely if the Almighty intended His book to be formulated into some system of thought that would be equally suited to the intellectual conformation of all men, he would have given it to us in that form Himself, and not left it to puny man, who is “of yesterday, and knows nothing” to make the vain attempt. Does he not pervert his *intellectual powers*? What is the use of intellect in relation to the Bible? Is it not to evolve its spiritual meaning, apply that meaning, first, to inspire and govern his own daily life, and then to make that meaning evident, impressive, and transforming to others? But instead of using his intellect for these purposes, he employs it to throw the Bible into logical propositions, and then to contend for these propositions as if they were the Bible. Instead of endeavouring to get “the incorruptible seed” of life out of the field of revelation, in order to lodge it in well-prepared hearts, his aim is to put that seed into the dry shell of his own technicalities. Instead of spreading out the Bible as a rich pasture for a hungry world, he spreads it out as an arena for mental gladiators. Instead of plucking from the Biblical fields the “rose of Sharon,” and “the lily of the valley,” and presenting them to men fresh with the tints and fragrance and dew of life, he plucks these celestial flowers to analyze them with his logic, and exhibit only to men their chemical elements, which have neither beauty nor sweetness,

but which are an offence to every sense. Does he not, moreover, pervert the *zeal of his heart*,—that divine fire which is put into the human soul, in order to impel the intellectual powers, and without which the intellect would no more move than the locomotive without steam? This precious force, given to stimulate man to battle against moral wrong, to promote the progress of humanity and the glory of God. Does not our polemic use to find out heretics, and to hunt them down; to trumpet his own orthodoxy, and to spread his own opinions?

Now, if perversity is a sin, the greater the blessings perverted the greater the sin. What boons has kind Heaven vouchsafed to man greater than the BIBLE, INTELLECT, and ZEAL?—the first the charter to eternal life, the second the eye to read it, and the third the impulse to make it his own. Man cannot dispense with either of these blessings. Each is indispensable to give value to the other. Destroy either, and the value of the three is gone. What is the Bible without intellect? A sun without an eye. What is intellect without the Bible? An eye without the sun. What is zeal without intellect? Blind impulse. What is intellect without zeal? An imperative machine. Who is a greater sinner than he who perverts these? He who turns to wrong use every production and element of nature, is innocent compared with such an one.

IV. SUCH CONTROVERSIES DEVELOP THE MOST HEARTLESS INHUMANITY. It blinds the polemic to the excellences of others. The supposed speculative errors of his opponent not only cloud from him every moral virtue, but are magnified into such crimes, that he rises to his view as a monster. It was the theological errors which the rabbinical theologues of the age imputed to Christ that hid from their eyes His celestial virtues, and made him appear a blasphemous criminal too enormous to be tolerated. The technical theologue who looks at a brother through the medium of his own orthodoxy, will fraternize with a modern scoundrel if he is

orthodox ; but, like Caiaphas of old, will rend his robes with pious horror at incarnate virtue if it conform not to his own views. What inhumanities have not been perpetrated in the name of orthodoxy ! The views of a brother have been misrepresented, his motives maligned, his feelings wounded, his position in society degraded, his reputation, dearer than his life, tarnished and rendered offensive. Our blood tingles in the fingers that hold this pen, when we remember the deeds of cruelty that this orthodox *animus* has perpetrated. What built the inquisition ?—What kindled the flames of martyrdom ?—What animated Bonner ?—What inspired Laud ?—What prompted Calvin to murder Servetus ?—What roused the Jewish Rabbis to put the Son of God to death ? I confess to a mysterious horror of the men who pride themselves in their orthodoxy.

The remarks made will suffice to justify our proposition that the controversies of a mere conventional theology are the most effective means of developing depravity. In all seriousness, we say, that if a man asked us to give him the worst specimen of depravity, we do not know that, amidst the aboundings of sin, we could take him to a better place for the purpose than the scene of such controversies.

We must conclude our ungrateful task. To you who dare to sit in judgment upon your brothers' faith, and become their accusers, I would suggest whether you cannot spend your short day of probation in a more honorable and useful way. It may be *easier* work to contend against theological opinions, which you consider erroneous, than to struggle against the moral evils, pride, materialism, worldliness, and such like—which are the very soul of speculative error, which crowd your own neighborhood, and perhaps swarm in your own heart. But which, I ask, is the most important, the most consistent, the most befitting erring mortals like ourselves ? O ye technical theologizers—theologasters—who, like your Jewish prototypes, tithe the “mint, and anise, and cummin” of theological thought, and neglect the weightier matters of moral truth and spiritual feeling, What is your

theology to the Bible? "We will not give up the Bible," as the children sing, for all your theologies. Astronomy may be very well, but it will not do for the soul-inspiring stars, nor for the life-giving sun. Botany may be very well, but it will not do for the flowers that clothe the meadows and the mountains, and beautify the landscape; nor for the trees from whose majestic branches we can get refreshing shade and delicious fruit. Pneumatics may be very well, but it will not do for the flowing atmosphere and the vital breeze. Yet I can candidly tell thee, that I would sooner have astronomy instead of these fair heavens, botany instead of the lovely landscape, pneumatics instead of the life-inspiring air, than thy miserable theology instead of the Bible.

Because I care not if all the scribe-theologues in Christendom call me a heretic, I cannot have any great commiseration for those who are so denounced, nor any great admiration of the magnanimity of those who proffer their help to those who would do better without it. The man who calls me a heretic pays me the only compliment that a traditional formalist can ever pay to the earnest and thoroughly independent student of the holy book. The greatest thinkers of all ages have been denounced as heretics by all the little Rabbis of their times. Honest doubt is better than traditional faith. Honest conviction though censured, is honorable. Rather let me good-naturedly laugh at the self-ignorant mortal that calls me heretic, than be indignant with him. Anyhow, let me not waste my breath to speak, or my ink to write, a word. *Vinco seu vincor, semper ego maculor*; whether I conquer or am conquered, I should disgrace myself. Hush! ye wordy warriors; "SHUN PROFANE AND VAIN BABBLINGS: FOR THEY WILL INCREASE UNTO MORE UNGODLINESS." "It is a pleasure," says a sage quoted by Bacon, "to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed upon the sea; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle, and the adventurers thereof, below; but no pleasure is comparable to standing upon the vantage ground of truth—a hill not to be commanded, and where

the air is always clear and serene—to see the errors and wanderings, and mists and tempests, in the vale below ; so always that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling or pride. Certainly it is heaven upon earth to have a man's mind move in charity, rest on Providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.”

The Genius of the Gospel.

ABLE expositions of the Gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers ; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the education of its *widest* truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach ; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim ; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

TWENTY-NINTH SECTION.—*Matt. x. 5—42.*

The Method of Saving Souls ; or, the Laws of an Evangelical Mission.

IN our last “section” we noticed the twelve men whom Christ called to be His apostles. From His selection we inferred the kind of men required to save souls. We concluded, from the fact that he chose such men as these twelve, first, That it is not *necessary* that the men to save souls should be distinguished by any particular adventitious circumstance, or any particular mental peculiarity ; and secondly, That it is necessary that they should be indoctrinated with the principles, endowed with the power, and guided by the rules, of Christ.

It is this last—the rules or laws which Christ enjoined upon these twelve when He “sent them forth”—that we shall now consider. Believing, as we do, with Stier, that

whatever Christ “spoke from time to time, he spoke for futurity, even to its final end; yea, even to eternity itself;”—that “the present and the immediate are the type of the more remote;”—and that, in sending forth these “twelve” He contemplates all later missions of these apostles and their successors. Regarding, I say, Christ’s commission in this light, I feel warranted in looking at these verses as giving the *laws*, *issues*, and *encouragements*, of an evangelical mission in every age. It is to the laws of an evangelical mission, or the method of saving souls, that we shall call attention in our present article.

I. THE LAWS OF AN EVANGELICAL MISSION. Every Christian is professedly an evangelist; yes, and every individual member of the Church is avowedly an evangelist. How is the evangelical mission to be worked out? Has Christ laid down any laws to guide us in the work, or is it left to the mere caprice and impulses of every individual? Churches and individuals have acted as if no definite rules existed. As in the working out the evangelical mission in these times, it is not frequently that you can discover the intelligent, regular, and harmonious operations of law, it is natural to ask, Are there laws specifically applicable to the enterprise? If so, it may be that in the Church’s neglect of these we may find much of its want of success.

Now, regarding the principles which Christ enjoined upon “the twelve,” when He “sent them forth,” as equally binding upon all Christians, in every age, we shall proceed to specify these principles as laws which should rule every Church in its endeavours to propagate the Gospel.

We infer, from this commission of Christ to His apostles, the following laws:—

First: *That the chief sphere of its labors should be the nearest its home.* “Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” The fact that Jesus Himself confined His labors to Judea; and that, in

the commission He gave to His disciples before His ascension to heaven, He distinctly commanded them to "begin at Jerusalem," and thence on;—acting ever on the most proximate, fully authorizes us in regarding this injunction to the twelve as an expression of a *general law* that should regulate all evangelizing efforts. This law is not an arbitrary impost; it is founded in the truest *love* and *wisdom*. Genuine love says, If you have a favor to bestow, offer it first to those of your own kin and neighbourhood. *Home first*, is the dictate of a true philanthropy. That feeling which induces man to cross seas, and to traverse islands and continents, to offer blessings which he has never presented to his own neighbors, who stand in equal need, is the simpering sentiment of a morbid and diseased mind, not the manly love of a true heart. The law is the dictate of WISDOM as well as love. (1.) We have greater facilities for giving the Gospel to our neighbors than to foreigners. They are within our reach, they understand our language, they can appreciate our mode of reasoning, they can test the sincerity of our motives. (2.) Our neighbors, when evangelized, would become more effective allies than foreigners. The stronger the forces in the centre, the more powerfully the influence will be felt at the extremities. All this is especially true where the neighbors are the men of this metropolis. What city—to use the language we have elsewhere employed*—would be such an auxiliary to help the glorious work as London, were it converted? It is the fountain of an influence whose streams meander through all the institutions, cities, towns, villages, mansions, and hovels, of the civilized world. You cannot fight the moral battles of the Gospel unless you get London as your faithful and loving ally. When the Church wins London, it wins the world!

Another law binding on the Church, in its evangelizing efforts, which we discover in this commission, is—

Secondly: *That the material wants of mankind are to be*

* See *Homilist*, vol. v., p. 37.

attended to as well as the spiritual. “And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils.” The command to preach “the kingdom of Heaven” implies—(1.) That the great *spiritual* want of mankind is the *reign of God* over all the powers of the soul—the making of the human will, in everything cheerfully obedient to the Divine. (2.) The Gospel is the system by which this reign is established;—hence it is called “the kingdom of heaven.” It is not a system merely to excite the sensibilities, or to enlighten and discipline the intellect; it is the *reign* of God in the soul (3.) The work of the Church is to bring the gospel to man for this purpose. This is its work, so far as the spiritual necessity of mankind is concerned.

But then, while attending to this work, do not be regardless of the *material* exigencies of humanity. “Heal the sick,” &c. The words, νεκροὺς ἐγείρετε—“raise the dead”—are most probably an interpolation. Bloomfield says, that “more reasons may be conceived for their *omission* than their insertion”;—Stier says, “We find this sentence wanting in most ancient manuscripts”;—and we hold it as a spurious importation from a later time. Besides, there is no instance of a resurrection effected by either of these Apostles.

Now, the fact that the apostles were endowed with power to remove the physical evils of mankind in their evangelical mission, and commanded to employ them, does certainly give the idea that the Church, in her endeavors to propagate the Gospel, must be mindful at the same time, of the corporeal and temporal requirements of men. This principle was acted upon in the ministry of Christ, and is everywhere implied, and often explicitly enjoined, in the writings of the apostles. Paul tells us to “bear each other’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.” James tells us, that “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction”;—and John says, “Whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of com-

passion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" This is a principle, obedience to which seems almost indispensable to success in the promotion of Christianity. (1.) Corporeal evils are obstructions to the reception of the truth. Men suffering under disease, poverty, slavery, oppression, are certainly not in the best position to receive the Gospel. The natural tendency of corporeal evils is to strengthen depravity, close the heart against God and man, and nurse misanthropy and impiety into a reckless rage. (2.) Earnest efforts to remove the corporeal evils of a people are amongst the most likely means to dispose them to listen to our doctrines. ' These evils are *felt* ; and he who generously removes them is hailed as a benefactor, and the heart opens to his words. Job says, that when the ear heard him, it "blessed" him. Why? Because he "delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him." Had the Church always acted upon this principle ;—had it endeavoured to give bread to the hungry, as well as bibles to the ignorant ; had it sought to deliver man from the social and political despotism of his fellow, as well as from the despotism of Satan ; had it struggled to redeem the body as well as the soul ; had it appeared to men more as a secular benefactor, and less as a theological belligerent, an ascetic devotee, or a sectarian partizan ; had the world seen it more in the acts of a genial messenger of a deep and genuine philanthropy, penetrating the darkest scenes of trial with a word to cheer and a hand to bless, and less in pompous ceremonies, conflicting creeds, and affected pietisms ;—I say, had this been the past history of the Church, it would have been now the sovereign of the world.*

Another law which we discover in this commission to "the twelve," binding on all Christians in their efforts to propagate the Gospel, is—

Thirdly : *That the same disinterested benevolence which has made us the recipients of the blessing, should animate us in its*

* See Homilist, vol. ii.

communication. “Freely ye have received, freely give.” This does not refer merely to the miraculous power of healing, &c., but includes the spiritual power of preaching as well. What you have received for this work, you have received freely, without merit, without recompense. From disinterested love you have received all, therefore give what you have received from the same principle. Three ideas are implied in the words :—(1.) That whatever good we have is the free gift of God ; (2.) that the good we possess we have the power of communicating ; and (3.) that, in the communication, we should be actuated by disinterested benevolence. “Freely give :” don’t make a gain of your ministry. The disciples would have a temptation in this direction. Endowed with such extraordinary powers of healing, as well as with soul-expanding doctrines, many of them whom they benefited would be likely to offer them splendid presents. The prohibition, therefore, was specially timesome. Christianity can only be effectually propagated by *disinterested* efforts. It must be given “freely” ;—not for the sake of office, sect, or gain, but for the gain of souls. “Freely give” ;—“a comprehensive and most pregnant position, which cannot be too much laid to heart by God’s ambassadors, even to the present day ; condemning all improper, methodical, and commercial, stipulations in preaching God’s grace ; all payment that surpasses the limit of their need (ver. 10.) ; and all those unbecoming perquisites which are ungracefully attached to the direct ministration of the word and sacraments.”*

How little of this free and spontaneous action have we in the Christian Church ! How much is done from sympathy with a sect, the spirit of worldly competition, the love of gain, power, and praise ! How few work “freely” under the inspiration of that Divine benevolence which swallows up all ideas of self and sect in sympathy with the general good and the glory of God !

Another law which we discover in this commission to

* Stier.

“the twelve,” binding upon all who are engaged in evangelizing efforts, is—

Fourthly: *That there must be an entire freedom of mind from all secular anxieties in the work.* “Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.” Naturally enough might the disciples have thought, when the command came, upon preparing a suitable outfit for the journey. They were to leave their homes and go amongst strangers, and that with a message not likely at first to win their favor. Should not provision be made? Surely they thought, when the message came, that an equipment of money, food, and raiment, was necessary, and they would feel anxious how best to make it. But Christ checks at once their rising solicitude. Provide nothing, He says: go as you are. Put not an additional fraction in your purse. Don’t take a second garment with you, nor even provision for the next meal. Start at once as you are. Now, probably it would be a “narrow perversion—a fanaticism of the letter”—to regard this prohibition as *literally* binding upon all who are engaged in evangelizing labors; but the spirit and meaning of the command—namely, *entire freedom of mind from all secular anxieties*—are undoubtedly binding on all evangelists. Solicitude about gold or silver, purse or scrip, should have no place in the minds of those who endeavor to convert mankind to the religion of Christ. There are two things which should always exclude this anxiety;—(1.) Faith in the munificent providence of our Master. He is ever with His true servants, and always able to guard them in every peril, and to supply their every want. (2.) Faith in the power of the Gospel to dispose those amongst whom we labor to render the necessary temporal provisions. Men who are rightly influenced by the ministry of a man will feel that “the workman is worthy of his meat.” Indeed it seems to me that Jesus here throws the support of His apostles upon the people they would preach to:—as if He

had said, Don't be anxious about temporal provisions. By a law of the human mind, a *feeling of moral obligation* to support you will be awakened in those whom you bless by your message. The gospel "workman is worthy of his meat." Worthy indeed! What temporal return bears any proportion to the good which a man conveys to another who is instrumental in breaking the moral slumbers of the mind, unsealing the fountains of spiritual feeling, rolling off the sepulchral stone that entombs the soul, and raising it into fellowship with God?

Another law we discern in this commission to "the twelve," binding upon all their evangelizing efforts, is—

Fifthly: *That our conduct towards men should be ever regulated by their moral condition.* And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you," &c. (1.) Their visits to men were to be determined by their *spiritual* state. When they entered a city, they were to enquire not for the rich, influential, and secularly distinguished, but for those who were inwardly worthy of their message. The worthy were not those who *deserved*, but those who *desired*, the blessings they had to offer. Those who were hungry in soul—who were waiting for the consolation of Israel. (2.) Their treatment of men was to be determined by their spiritual state. If the house be "worthy"—if the family are those who are thirsting after the true peace, give them the benediction; but if the family be not "worthy," let the peace return to you. "The blessing will cling to the place where it meets with welcome;" but where it meets with no resting-place, "it returns to those that pronounced it," as to its source of life. "Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet." "The ἐκτινάσσειν κονιορτὸν"—shaking off the dust—says Olshausen, is a mere symbolical representation of total

and utter separation and renunciation." (Acts xiii. 51 ; xviii. 6.) To express an idea by means of an act is, in the Old Testament, as well as in the New Testament, and indeed throughout the whole of the East, a very common process. This kind of language or speech is, to the sensuous man, more impressive than words. (Compare Matt. xxvii. 24.) The symbolical action expresses, perhaps, three ideas:—(1.) A disavowal of all connexion. (2.) A horror of taking away aught that belongs to them, not even "dust." (3.) A renunciation of all participation in their guilt.

The great principle of the whole is, Let our conduct towards men be regulated by their moral character, not by their secular circumstances. Whoever the man is, if he is "worthy," visit him ; bless him ; dwell with him, if convenient. If not "worthy," however rich or influential, have nothing to do with him : shake off the dust from your shoes. *Know no man after the flesh.* As evangelists, we have to do with souls, and the only distinction we have to recognise is the distinction of soul.

Another law which we discover in this commission to "the twelve," binding on all engaged in evangelical labors, is—

Sixthly : *That the highest intelligence should be blended with the purest character.* "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." As serpents were proverbially sharp-sighted, and doves proverbially inoffensive, the two are selected to show the importance of uniting *purity* and *intelligence* together ; guilelessness of character with sagacity of judgment ; subtlety of intellect with simplicity of heart. The nature of the serpent and that of the dove are to be united in the true evangelist. These two poles of character are to be brought together. The worth of each, in character, depends upon their combination. The mere dove-simplicity alone in a man would be little else than child-like inanity ; and the serpent-sagacity alone would be nothing but cunning and craft. Temper them both together—let the ingenuous and the philosophic be properly blended—and there will be

the qualifications of an evangelist. Alas! these are not frequently found in their true combination in those who are seeking to propagate the gospel. Sometimes you see a heartless sagacity, which interests with its feats of cleverness, but more frequently repels the heart by its selfish cunning, and always fails to win the soul by its appeals; and sometimes you see a simpering non-intelligent simplicity which excites the contempt and ridicule of the thoughtful. O for a coalition of these attributes, now so separate! May purity of principle and wisdom of policy soon wed and work in every church.

Christ here gives a good *reason* why these two elements of character should be united:—"I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." You are to labor amongst a population as malignant and as cunning as wolves; therefore be as "wise as serpents, and as harmless as doves." As if Jesus had said, The malign emotion can only be borne down by the inoffensive and amiable;—be harmless as doves, therefore. The cunning can only be met and mastered by superior wisdom;—be wise, therefore, as serpents. The general truth is, that *intellect in the world must be met by intellect in the Church, and depravity in the world must be met by purity in the Church.* An intellectual age will never bow to a weak-minded ministry; a depraved age will never be reformed by a corrupt Church.

Another law we discover in this commission to "the twelve," binding upon all in their evangelizing efforts, is—

Seventhly: *That confidence in the paternal providence of God should be strong enough to raise us above the fear of men.* Christ commands them not to be afraid of either of the two following things:—(1.) Not of the accusations of enemies. "They will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in the synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For

it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." As we become *self-oblivious*, absorbed in universal love and piety, we become the true organs of the Divine. Let our own selfish thoughts vanish, and the Spirit of our Father will speak through us, and speak the things suitable to the hour. *We grow divine in thought as we feel dependence upon the Infinite Intellect*, Man gets divine inspiration only by losing himself in the Divine Will. (2.) Christ commands them not to be afraid of the malignity of enemies. "Fear not them which kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." This verse, analyzed, would give the following ideas. First: That human nature is made up of body and soul. Some beings have body only; some, perhaps, have soul only;—man unites them both. Secondly: That the corporeal part may be destroyed, whilst the spiritual remains uninjured. That which kills the body cannot kill the soul. "The soul, secure in her existence, smiles at the drawn dagger, and defies the point." Thirdly: That the honest working out of a Divine commission may expose the body to destruction, but the neglect of the duty would expose both body and soul to the destruction of Satan.* Fourthly: As an inference from the last, that the only "fear" which a good man should

* I agree with Stier in regarding Satan as referred to here. Stier gives, in substance, these five reasons. First: Because the fundamental idea of the whole discourse is not to be afraid of God, but to confide in Him. Its spirit is, Trust in Him who can protect you, but fear him who would destroy you. Secondly: Because, as the two members of the sentence run parallel, it is not allowable to use *φοβείσθαι* in two distinct senses. It cannot mean "alarm" in one place, and trust, the opposite, in another. Thirdly: The destruction of the soul is never, throughout the entire Scriptures, spoken of as being the work of God. Fourthly: The true and more profound sense of the whole saying cannot be developed on the other supposition. It would be very strange and inexplicable to unite in one the command to fear God, who casts into hell, and to trust Him as a merciful Father. Fifthly: The parallel passage in Luke xii. 3—7, confirms the impression.

have is of that dereliction of duty which would place him in the power of Satan, the fell destroyer. Fear not man, but fear the devil ; fear not bodily injuries in duty, but fear moral ones ; fear not suffering, but fear sin. You may kill your soul by saving your body ; if, in doing so, you neglect a duty or commit a wrong ;—and on the other hand, you may save your soul by allowing your body to be martyred in the prosecution of the right.

Such, then, are the LAWS OF EVANGELIZATION which Jesus inculcated in this commission, and which we regard as binding upon the Church in all ages. If these have been neglected or transgressed, it is certainly no wonder that the evangelizing work has made but little progress. The case stands thus :—Christ committed the work of evangelizing the world to the Church, and gave distinct and enlightened directions how it was to be carried out. The Church has been aiming and struggling for the end, but it has been comparatively regardless of the method. Is my allegation unfounded ? Then I ask, Which of the seven laws which I have specified has the Church not transgressed ?—Has it always *made the chief sphere of its labor the nearest its home* ? On the wings of a mere sentimental charity, it has often left the masses in its neighborhood to expend its energies in distant scenes. It has gone abroad to destroy evil when evil was most rampant at its own door.—Has it always sought to attend to the *material wants of mankind as well as the spiritual* ?—Has it not *frequently*, and almost *systematically*, separated the two interests ?—cared little or nothing about the political oppressions, the physical wants, and the domestic trials of men, while it pretended to be filled with unutterable concern for their souls ? It has acted the part of a priest in relation to man's body : left it lying in agony on the road, plundered and mangled by robbers and thieves, when it should have acted as the Samaritan.—Has the same *disinterested love which God displays in imparting religion to man, actuated the Church in its endeavours to propagate it* ?—Has it “freely” given ?—Has it not been actuated more by the

love of gain, or praise, or sect, than by the free love for souls and God?—Has it *always had a mind free from solicitude about purse, and scrip, and gold*?—Has there been no worldly spirit displayed in its operations?—Has its *respect towards men been always governed more by their spiritual worthiness than secular respectability*?—Has it gone, in its visitations, more to the morally worthy than to the secularly rich?—Has it *blended the highest intelligence with the purest character*?—Has it not sometimes displayed nothing but the “craft” of the serpent, and sometimes nothing but the weak inoffensiveness of the dove?—How seldom have you seen the two attributes in their true proportions?—Has *faith in the Paternal superintendence always raised it above the fear of men*? Let the Church, instead of being regulated by the policy of little human organization, go back in spirit to Capernaum; stand, with “the twelve,” before Christ; listen to His commission, and pledge itself to carry that commission out according to His directions;—let this be done, and the dawn of the brightest era will commence—the key-note of the highest harmony will be struck.

Germs of Thought.

SUBJECT:—*One, and only One, Probation—a Benevolent Arrangement.*

“I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.”—Isa. xxxviii. 11.

“Neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.”—Luke xvi. 26.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Eleventh.

THERE are two facts that give death profound solemnity. First: *That it separates a man for ever from his connexions in this world.* Hezekiah felt this now. “I shall behold man

no more," &c. Job felt this. "When a few years are come," &c. What living man has not been impressed with this idea!—the idea that when he dies he shall "return no more to his house." The old scene of his first impressions, anxious labors, tender friendships, and dear associations, is left for ever. However trying this world may be, it contains much, very much, that is dear to us. Here we felt the first sensations of life; here the first trains of thought arose; here we have received the elements of our character; here all our joys have been experienced, our trials endured, and our labors prosecuted. Here sleep the dust of our parents and our friends. To leave all this for ever is a sad thought. To "return no more" for ever to the field we have cultivated, to the shop where we have transacted our business, to the study where we have striven after knowledge; to "return no more" to our dwelling, and to the dear circle of the heart;—how solemn all this! The other fact that gives death profound solemnity is, Secondly, *That it separates a man for ever from all probationary means of improvement.* Abraham gave this idea to the rich man in the world of perdition: he assured him there was an *impassable "gulf" fixed between him and all remedial means.* After death character seems stereotyped. He that is unjust remains unjust for ever. This is a more solemn fact than the other, though perhaps not so deeply and generally felt. To be cut off for ever, if we are wicked, from Bibles, sanctuaries, and all mediatorial influences and helps;—to have an impassable gulf between all that is bright and fair in the universe and one's self;—how solemn this!

Now, the point on which I wish to fasten your attention is, *That this fact, which is profoundly solemn, is neither cruel nor unjust, but on the contrary highly benevolent.* Sceptics ask the question, Why should this be? Why should there not be a *plurality* of probations? Why should not man have more chances than one? Where is the goodness of God making man's destiny, through eternal ages, to depend on his conduct during the few passing years of this

earthly life? Now, we are prepared to maintain that there is much more Divine goodness displayed in His giving man only *one* probation, than in giving him *two* or any number more.

I. THERE IS MORE GOODNESS IN THIS ARRANGEMENT TO THE INDIVIDUAL HIMSELF. Three facts will illustrate this.

First: *That in case a man had a second probation, and it failed, his guilt and misery would be considerably enhanced by it.* (1.) *Punishment will be, in a great measure, proportioned by the privileges and opportunities abused.* "He that knoweth his Master's will, and doeth it not," &c. "If I had not spoken to them," said Christ, "they had not had sin." What is the guilt of a heathen compared with a man living in Christian lands? (2.) *That the privileges and opportunities connected with his first probation are such as to impose incalculable responsibility.* "If he that despised Moses' law died without mercy," &c. What, then, would be the guilt of a man who had not only lived through a first probation, but a second? What wrath would he be treasuring up, &c.

Secondly: *That the man who abused the first probation would be most likely to abuse the second.* If a man pass through all the remedial influences of the first probation—nature, sacred literature, sanctuaries, the counsels and admonitions of the pious, the Gospel ministry—and not be saved, but hardened, by all;—would there not be a *certainty* that, if he entered upon a second probation, that the second would also fail? (1.) *Because he would enter upon the second with hardened sensibilities.* He did not so the first. We began our existence here with *tender consciences*. At first we shrank from the false, &c. Our whole moral nature revolted at the first sin. (2.) *He would enter on the second with confirmed habits.* His thoughts and actions would be bound to forms. It was not so with the first. We argue, now, that the longer a man remains unconverted, the less likely is it that he will ever be. Many to-night, on earth,

have passed the convertible stage. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin?" &c. If it be asked, May not some new influences be brought to bear upon the soul in the second probation that did not act upon him in the first? We ask, What new influences are possible? We can only conceive of two kinds—the *penal* and the *merciful*. Will *penal* sufferings convert? Does the father awaken love in the child by the rod? Will ages of misery in hell awaken love to the Creator? Purgatorial fire is a philosophical absurdity. Love to God is virtue, and can the GREAT ONE ever make a creature love Him by tormenting him with suffering? And as to *merciful* influences, Can there be any more merciful power brought to bear upon the soul than now? Can God give a more moving and mighty expression of His love than sending His only-begotten Son?

Thirdly: *That man's knowledge of a second probation would tend to counteract upon his mind the saving influence of the first.* (1.) It would strengthen that *procrastinating principle* in his nature which leads him now to postpone the question of his salvation. If now, when he knows he may only have a single day to live, or even a single hour, he postpones the question of religion to "a more convenient season"—Felix did this, even after the mighty force of Paul's appeal to his conscience—how much more would man, if he were assured that when these few years of his earthly existence had run out, there would come another season in the great future enabling him to do there what he had neglected to do here. (2.) *It would strengthen that presuming tendency in his nature which induces him to run the risk of the future.* There is a tendency in man to rely on precedents—to argue from the past to the future. Because it has not been so, it will not be so; it *must* not be so. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily," &c. On the whole, then, we say it is *good* to the man *himself* that there should be but one probation. A *plurality* of probations would be a curse to the race.

II. THERE IS MORE GOODNESS IN THE ARRANGEMENT TO THE UNIVERSE. First: *Because it puts a greater restraint upon evil.* How would evil spread by the multiplication of probations! Who does not feel that it is a mercy that such men as Nero, Napoleon, &c., have only to live a short time? Depraved as men are, it is a blessing that the period of human life has been abbreviated—that they do not live to their nine hundred years, as in antediluvian times. Secondly: *It heightens the motives to virtue.*

In conclusion,—First: *This subject teaches the great solemnity of life.* Why are we here? To gratify the senses, to amass a fortune, or to gain a little influence in the world? No! but to prepare characters for eternity. Secondly: *This subject explains the earnestness of God in His appeals to man for reformation now.* How earnest is God! “As I live, saith the Lord God,” &c. Great beings are never earnest about little things. “To-day,” says God. He knows that

“The sun of grace once set,
Shall rise no more.”

SUBJECT:—*David and Mephibosheth, a Faint Image of God and the World.*

“And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?” &c. -2 Sam. ix. 1—13.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Twelfth.

THE fragment of history of which this chapter is composed may be looked upon in two lights.

First: *As supplying a fine illustration of human friendship.* Between David and Jonathan there existed a friendship the most tender and strong. Years had passed away since death, which dissolves all human relationships, had snatched Jonathan from David. But Jonathan was still fresh in the heart of David. Death cannot *really* deprive us of our friends after all. Memory holds them, enshrines them,

presses them to the heart, makes them more real to us after death than before. She puts the heart in closet communion with them. Love for Jonathan's memory induces David to seek out some relation of his on whom to bestow his favors. "Is there yet any of the house of Saul?" &c.; as if he had said, Saul had a very large house once (1 Chron. viii. 33); but death so soon breaks up large families, and carries one by one away until the whole is gone, that perhaps of all Saul's large family not one may be left now. But if there is one, whoever he be, I should like to show him some kindness for my ever-loved Jonathan's sake. Any one related to Jonathan would be dear to me. Friendship gives a common interest: what our friend loves we love. His children, in a sense, are our's. David's enquiry leads to the discovery that one of Jonathan's children is living—Mephibosheth. The chapter records the kindness that David at once shows him. He sends for him, puts him in possession of his patrimonial inheritance, &c. Thank God that, amidst all the selfishness and misanthropy of the world, there is such a thing as *real* friendship! The other light in which this piece of history may be looked upon is—

Secondly: *As a faint image of Divine love to the world.* We are far from regarding David here as a type of the Eternal, and far also from approving, in any measure, the principle of what is called "spiritualizing" the Scriptures; for this *spiritualizing*, though perhaps one of the best means of making a minister popular, is also one of the best means to mangle the Word of God, and make intelligent men infidels. Still we are, I presume, warranted to use facts in human history, as Jesus used the waving corn-fields, the flowing streams, the fruitful vineyards, the flowers of the meadow, and the birds of heaven;—to illustrate spiritual and divine facts. Besides *the good in man is a Divine emanation*, and the best means of giving an idea of God. I see more of the Eternal in the true kindness of a holy man—such kindness as David now displays—than I can see in any part of material nature. It is a brighter

reflection of the INFINITE ONE than stars or suns. I see the sun in the ray ;—the dew-drop mirrors the Atlantic.

I feel justified, therefore, in looking upon David's conduct towards Mephibosheth as serving to *illustrate God's conduct towards our ruined world.*

I. THE DISINTERESTEDNESS OF THE KINDNESS IS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE DIVINE. First : The kindness which David displayed to Mephibosheth was *unmerited*. Was David under any obligation to show this kindness ? No ; if he had allowed him to perish with hunger, who would have complained ? Was there any excellence in the son of Jonathan to call it forth ? No ; David had the affection even before he knew that there was such a person. Was God under any obligation to show mercy to the world ? or did He see aught of excellence in the world to call it forth ? No ; if He had left humanity to perish for ever in its sins, no one could have complained. Angels would still have sung on, "Just and right are thy ways," &c. Was there an excellence in man to call it forth ? No ; "God commendeth His love to us in the while we were yet sinners," &c. Secondly : The kindness which David showed Mephibosheth was *unsought*. The son of Jonathan did not make any application ;—he did not knock at the door of royalty entreating favor. Did the world seek the gift of Christ ? No, for two reasons :—(1.) Because it did not feel the need of a Saviour. (2.) If it had it never could have supposed that such a gift was possible. God sent Christ into the world not only without the world's request, but against the world's will. "He came to his own, but his own," &c.

II. THE OCCASION ON WHICH THIS DISINTERESTED KINDNESS WAS DISPLAYED IS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE DIVINE. First : *The kindness which David showed Mephibosheth was in consideration of some one else.* It was "for Jonathan's sake." Why all this love to the poor *lame youth* more than to some one else ? Hundreds in the empire perhaps required and

desired more than he. *Because of Jonathan.* Why does God show love to this world more than to hell? Hell requires mercy. *Because of some One else.* Christ is not the cause of God's love, but He is its channel. All blessings, temporal and spiritual, come through Christ. "He took not on him the nature of angels," &c. Secondly: *The kindness which David showed Mephibosheth was on account of some one else who was very near to the heart of the king.* You remember David's wail over Jonathan: "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan," &c. How dear is Christ to the Everlasting Father. "Mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth." "My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." I do not understand the mysterious connexion subsisting between Jesus and the Everlasting Father. My intellect bows reverently before the mystery. But the Bible tells me that it is that of "an only-begotten Son."

III. THE RESULTS WHICH THIS DISINTERESTED KINDNESS REALIZED ARE ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE DIVINE. First: *It found out Mephibosheth.* "Then king David sent and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar." Christ came to seek and to save; like the man who had lost one of his sheep, the woman her silver, the father his son. The apostles were sent out in search of God's objects of love. "God's love searches men out." Providence, conscience, and the Gospel, are His messengers. (Matt. xxii. 2—10.) Secondly: *It restored him to his patrimonial inheritance.* "I will restore thee all the land." &c. (Ver. 7.) Thou shalt walk the fields and meadows which thy father often trod; thou shalt live in the old house where thy mother caressed thee, and thy father thrilled thee with the tales of his exploits; and the green acres and the old family mansion shall be *thine own*. God's love restores us to our lost possessions. Salvation is "paradise regained." "All things are yours," &c. Thirdly: *Exalted to distinguished honors.* "And thou shalt eat bread at my table continually." (Ver. 7.) "If any man hear my voice, I will come in unto

him," &c. Fourthly: *The command of suitable attendants.* "Thy sons and thy servants shall till the land for him," &c. What agents God employs for the objects of his love! "All things work together for good." "Are they not all ministering spirits?" &c.

SUBJECT:—*The Grave in the Garden.*

"Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand."—John xix. 41, 42.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Thirtieth.

THE history of sin in the Bible is associated with gardens;—the darkest things in the moral universe are associated with the fairest in the material. The first human sin that brought death into the world, and all our woe, was perpetrated amidst the beauties of a *garden*. The greatest spiritual suffering ever perhaps endured in our world was experienced in a *garden*. It was in the garden of Gethsemane that Christ exclaimed, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful," &c.; and the grave of Him who is to swallow up death in victory, was in a *garden*.

It would seem, from 2 Kings, xxi. 26, that the ancients were accustomed to have sepulchres in their gardens. Amon "was buried in his sepulchre, in the garden of Uzza." Natural affection would suggest the idea of having the grave in a garden. It is far more in accordance with the dictates of the human heart to bury our dead in the garden, amongst the flowers and shrubs, than to transport them, as is now the custom, to scenes far beyond the reach of family observation. *Religion*, too, might have suggested the idea. The grave in the garden would serve as a monitor to the living tenant;—it would remind him that whatever

may be his pleasures and possessions, he would soon have to resign all for the cold and lonely grave. This grave of Christ in the garden suggests three things :—

I. THE CONNEXION OF TRIAL WITH THE FAIREST SCENES OF LIFE. *Death in a garden.* Let a man be in the most propitious circumstances, he is sure to have something to pain his heart. Naaman was a great captain, but he was a leper; Paul a great apostle, but he had a thorn in the flesh; David a mighty sovereign, but his house was not right with God. Man looks (1.) to new relationships, and fancies they will be a beautiful garden, on which the sun will shine and the dews descend, but he will find a grave there. He looks (2.) to new departments of business as a garden, but he will find a *grave* there. There is some cloud on every landscape, a mildew on every flower. It suggests—

II. THE ENORMOUS NATURE AND TREMENDOUS SCOPE OF SIN. First: *The enormous nature.* What was the moral cause of Christ's death? and what is the moral cause of the death of every man? Sin. Secondly: *The tremendous scope.* What a range and freedom God allows sin in this world! He allows it to destroy the best things in the world. It put Christ in the grave.

III. THE CONNEXION OF RELIEVING CIRCUMSTANCES WITH THE GREATEST TRIALS. Death is a great trial, but there is a "garden" left around it. First: There are *constitutional reliefs*. There are reliefs arising from our *constitution*. There is a self-healing principle in nature. Break a branch from the tree, &c.; wound the body, cut the flesh, or break a limb: and you see the self-healing power exude and work. It is so in the soul. Thought succeeds thought like the waves of the ocean, and each tends to wear out the impression its predecessor has made. Secondly: There are *incidental reliefs*. New events, new engagements, new relationships, tend to heal the wound. Thirdly: There are

Christian reliefs : the assurance of after-life, the hope of a future reunion, &c. Such are the reliefs. These, like the flowers and shrubs of a lovely "garden," spring up around our hearts, and cover the grave of our sorrows and trials with the shadow of their foliage. Yes ; though we have our trials, we have still our gardens. Young life starts up about our graves, &c.

"Life's dreariest path has some sweet flowers,
Its cloudiest day some sun."

SUBJECT :—*The Want of the World, and the Way of Supplying it.*

"He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth : and the isles shall wait for his law."—Isa. xlii. 3.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Fourteenth.

I. THAT MORAL RECTITUDE IS THE GREAT WANT OF THE WORLD. We take the words "judgment" and "law" in the text as expressing the same generic idea—*rectitude* ; that is, a rightness in man in all the powers and operations of his soul, and in all his relations to God and the universe. This rectitude is his want of wants. The want of it involves the want of all other good. First : *Rectitude will put an end to all the painful feelings which afflict the individual soul.* Conflict of passions—fear—jealousy—envy—ambition—remorse ; these, and kindred feelings which torment the individual soul, will all disappear when rectitude is established. Secondly : *Rectitude will put an end to all the social evils which afflict the state.* Monopoly—injustice—oppression—cupidity—the source of poverty and feuds—would all go were rectitude established. Thirdly : *Rectitude would put an end to all religious evils which afflict the world.* Priestcraft and superstition, under whose weight the populations of empires have groaned for long centuries, will go with the

establishment of rectitude. *Rectitude* is the panacea; it will heal all the evils. It will make Eden bloom again. Well may the "isles wait" for it. Universal *conscience* is crying out for rectitude. The fact that they wait for it implies—(1.) That they have a deep belief in its existence. All men believe that there is rectitude somewhere. It implies—(2.) That they have a capacity to receive it. Man has a capacity to discern moral distinctions—a capacity which links him to law, retribution, and God. It implies—(3.) That they feel its necessity. They wait for it in earnest expectation. "The whole creation groaneth," &c.

II. THAT THERE IS A GLORIOUS BEING ENGAGED TO ESTABLISH RECTITUDE IN THE WORLD. "He shall not fail." Who is HE? He is described in the preceding verses as the "Servant," the "Elect" of Jehovah, &c. Christ's work is to establish rectitude. He died, and lives again, "to put away sin." First: *His life gives the highest expression of rectitude.* He embodied the right. "In His life the law appears, drawn out in living characters." Secondly: *His death gives the highest motives to rectitude.* Thirdly: *His Spirit supplies the highest helps to rectitude.*

Were we to judge of the end of Christ's work from the conduct of some of His professors, we should conclude that He came to establish forms of theological thought and expression—certain ecclesiastical organizations and rituals—little sects,—each contending for the infallibility of his own faith. Christ came to establish *rectitude*, and let us give ourselves to this same work.

III. THAT THIS WORK OF ESTABLISHING RECTITUDE IS CARRIED ON WITH INVINCIBLE PERSEVERANCE. "He shall not fail," &c.

There are four things which cause men to fail and be discouraged in an enterprise.

First: *The want, at the outset, of a full appreciation of all the difficulties that would arise in the working of it out to*

completion. Men frequently embark in an undertaking, and as they proceed one difficulty after another arises which they never foresaw, and which they are thoroughly unprepared to meet and master. Baffled, conquered, they resign, and leave the work unfinished. But Christ will never "fail nor be discouraged" on this account. He saw the end from the beginning. All the arguments of infidelity, all the efforts of persecutors, all the opposition which prejudice, craft, and depravity, would ever raise in any age, He foresaw, and was prepared to meet.

Secondly : *The want of a thorough sympathy with the undertaking.* Men sometimes begin a work from certain motives—gain or fame, or it may be from benevolence—but with no *heartly* sympathy; and the consequence is, that their little interest in it gradually decreases, until at last they give it up altogether;—they "fail" and are "discouraged." Man will not long continue in a work if his heart is not in it. Will Christ never "fail or be discouraged" on this account? Never! His whole heart is in it. He has proved His interest in it by giving His life to promote it.

Thirdly : *The want of a thorough acquiescence of the conscience in the undertaking.* Men sometimes begin a work, and they find that it is not such that their conscience approves of. Though it may be lucrative—though it may lead them to fortune and fame—yet their conscience disapproves it; and by its constant rebukes, they are forced to give it up. Men have often left profitable trades, and what are considered "honourable" professions, from this cause. But Christ will never "fail nor be discouraged" on this account. His conscience is with the undertaking. It is a righteous enterprise;—it is fulfilling the will of Heaven.

Fourthly : *The want of time to complete the undertaking.* Men often begin a work to which they attach vast importance, and which meets the entire sympathies of their hearts and consciences, and fail in its accomplishment for the want of time. Death comes and breaks our purposes,

and leaves our work undone. We leave the world with unfinished undertakings—with undeveloped plans. But Christ will never “fail nor be discouraged” on this account. He is alive to live for ever. Ministers and Missionaries die, but He lives.

Brother,—Let us have faith in the work of establishing *rectitude* in the world. Let us labour faithfully under the Great Master, do our little part in our short day, and feel that, after we are gone, the work will go on. Jesus lives, and “He shall not fail nor be discouraged.” Amidst the wreck of thrones, the revolutions of empires, the succession of generations, and the sweep of centuries, He will work on until He hath “set judgment on the earth;” until truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven.”

SUBJECT :—*Present Forbearance No Argument Against Future Retribution.*

“Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.”—Eccles. viii. 11.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Fiftieth.

ALL writing divides itself into two great branches—the mutable and the immutable ; that which is for a season only, and that which is equally for all time ;—the one sporting with the mere accidents of life, the other dealing with its unchanged and unchanging principles. The superior excellence of Solomon’s writings is to be attributed to the fact, that they belong chiefly to the latter class. What he wrote was highly suited to his own day, but the far greater proportion is no less suited to ours. Moral facts—relations—principles, never change.

The book of Ecclesiastes may be said to contain Solomon's matured wisdom.* Here he gives us the teachings of experience. It was after he had tried the world, tasted its joys and its sorrows; when he had exhausted its deepest fountains of happiness and delight; when he had seen it in all its phases, he wrote "vanity" upon the whole. The book is, therefore, eminently practical and admonitory. Many of the subjects which occupied the mind of the writer are strikingly applicable and suggestive to ourselves. Our text is amongst these. Solomon had looked abroad, and had seen sin abounding;—men revelling in iniquity, vainly counting that, because God kept silence, He would never awake to judgment. Who can deny that this is true of our own day?

To show the operation of this principle, and some of the varied aspects it now assumes, will be our first endeavour; and, in the second place, we may point out some of the fallacies and inconsistencies which such a course of conduct involves.

I. THE OPERATION OF THE PRINCIPLE, &c.

First: *It has its influence amongst merely professing Christians.* It lies at the root of their indecision. When brought beneath the telling appeals, and remonstrances, and threatenings of the Bible, they come to form resolutions that their part, in the future, shall be more decided for God; but when they have left the immediate operation of strong religious influence, and mixed again with the busy activities of life—when they have dived into its dissipations, and had to do with the stern realities of time—the sterner realities of eternity have too often faded from their spiritual vision, and they have afresh cast themselves into the whirlpool of this world's commotion, or sunk into its ease and forgetfulness. It may not be distinctly present to the minds of such persons, but there lives beneath all this a cherished

* It is here assumed that Solomon is the author of this book, and that it was a late production of the royal proverbialist. Both are matters of controversy.

persuasion that a retributive God is yet afar off, and therefore delays may be indulged.

Secondly : *It has its influence upon the religiously indifferent.* We speak now of persons who occupy a midway position between a profession of Christianity and open infidelity. Generally, they belong to those easy, quiet sort of people, who never trouble themselves about such matters. They certainly know something of an uneasy conscience when they lend their attention to religious subjects—when they think of God, and death, and judgment ;—but there is so much of the real, the tangible, about the present, and so much, apparently, of the unreal about the future, that they cannot possibly divide their attention and energies between them. To them there is nothing threatening in the horizon. What *may* come they know not, nor are they much concerned to know. They hope to be prepared for things as they turn up upon the wheel of fortune. To them there is a powerful argument in—“All things as they were.” A change *may* come, certainly, but there is no promise of such change coming now.

In both these classes of character, there is much of the same aspect in the operation of the principle. There is not so much a studied, deliberate deportment ; it is a mere living for the day, with a dread of looking at the morrow, unless it be still more to becloud eternity. The principle has a marked influence upon every-day life. Men trifle with sin, play with conscience, and violate the weightiest moral obligations ; but they venture for this time, and perhaps they think for this time only. Yes ; it is a venture, because they flatter themselves that judgment will not, in the ordinary course of things, follow upon the next crime. Were the penalty of transgression suspended over their heads, ready to fall upon the commission of sin, they might be restrained ; but it is in the future,—how far they know not, nor do they care to enquire. Enough to know it *is* in the future ; and they are willing to believe it is far enough to give room for repentance after another sin.

Thirdly : *There is yet another class by whom the principle is embraced, and held as a part of their determined creed.* To these the undeviating course of things supplies a sober argument, that “to-morrow will be as this day, and much more abundant;”—that the past is only a pledge of what will be, and the order of things is not destined to be broken in upon by any new dispensation. Of course we allude to the professedly infidel. Of such a class St. Peter has forewarned us, in his Second Epistle—third chapter, third and fourth verses—where he writes :—“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers,” &c. The carnal mind, naturally infidel, soon takes hold of the argument, which the uninterrupted order of things seems to supply, against the testimony of revealed truth. There requires no great stretch of mind, no subtle process, no severe searchings of logic. The argument is palpable. They only need to open their eyes, and they see the undeviating functions of nature. The sun pursues his course through the heavens to-day with a lustre equal to that which he shed down upon our world a thousand years ago. The seasons follow their wonted order. Spring comes, as fresh as ever, with bud and blossom ; Summer with her full-blown beauty ; Autumn’s hands are filled with golden produce ; and old Winter wraps himself in his snowy vestments. To the eye of one who cares not to analyze the past, or to indulge in serious thoughts of the future, things appear to be now as they have been, and as they must ever be ; and thus present, living, undeniable, facts are made to give the lie to everything predictive of a change.

We have thus glanced at the operation of the principle of the text, as seen in three distinct classes of character—the nominally Christian, the wholly indifferent, and the decidedly unbelieving. It assumes many varied shades, and is widely operative in our own day ; and thus what ought to be the most solemnly affecting portion of Christian truth—the coming of a retributive state—is nullified, and “the heart of the sons of men is, indeed, set in them to do evil.”

II. THE EVILS OF THE PRINCIPLE.

First : *It erects a false standard between right and wrong.* The distinction between right and wrong—virtue and vice—is not conventional ;—something to be modified for mere convenience. However the sentiments of men upon these subjects may change, to God they remain the same, and the law by which they are measured is immutable as its Author. Punished or not punished, now or in the future—or, if such a thing might be, never punished at all—such a fact could in no way affect the character of an essentially evil deed. This position admits of illustration from the functions of civil and domestic government.

Secondly : *The course of conduct specified in the text argues a deplorable ignorance of, or dishonesty towards, other parts of the Divine administration.* If God be the universal Lawgiver ; if the same hand which penned the Decalogue, impressed upon nature her laws, and fixed the principles of her movements ; then there is something to be apprehended from a course of sin, even though a just recompense may be long delayed. In the Bible we read, in the clearest terms, that “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Here all is plain and determinate. The voice is direct from the upper sanctuary ; the mandate is express from the great King ;—but there are the whisperings of the Divine will to be heard from the oracle of nature. We see and feel, even now, something of the workings of a moral administration. We see a course of vice persisted in ; and it is followed by penalty, not always proportionate, perhaps ; still, in some degree, retribution, comes. A young man forms and indulges intemperate habits, and soon, a constitution, naturally good, is prematurely broken down ; and pains and disease, in varied forms, tell us that the Author of man’s physical economy has attached penalties to the breach of physical law. We find that even *neglect* of duty entails more or less punishment. If youth be suffered to pass unimproved, life’s prospects, as a rule, are blighted. The general course of things unquestionably is, that sin—vice—entails punishment even in this

life. There is yet a further point of analogy. Sins are only punished remotely. It may be that the very course of conduct which is destined to bring down upon us the bitterest suffering, is that which, for a time, proves a source of ecstatic pleasure. A majority of sins are of this character. For the present they gratify, though in the future they must punish.

Here, then, we have a lesson. If God has established this order of things ; if He has thus suspended penalty upon transgression ;—if, we say, the God of the Bible is the God of these arrangements, then we ought, to say the least, to be very cautious how we adopt the principle of the text ; for from nature, as well as from the Bible, we see it is unsound. God's testimony read, and God's testimony seen and felt, are one—viz., *that present forbearance is no argument against future retribution.* In this life we may sin for a season with apparent impunity. Our sky may be bright, but our sins, in the meantime, may be gathering into one big thunder-cloud on the horizon, which is destined to break upon us in one overwhelming torrent of direst woe. Even so when this life and another is taken as the periods. We may sin for a season—"sentence against an evil work" may not be "executed speedily"—but all nature joins testimony with the Bible in declaring that sin shall not go unpunished.

Thirdly : *The conduct is opposed to the entire economy under which we live.* The varied members of this economy are neither independent nor accidental. There are certain first principles which demand others more dependent in their office and character. Man is sinful : human nature is fallen. God designs to raise it ; but in a manner consistent with His own character, and the character of man. Moral agents have to be dealt with ;—He therefore employs moral means. The world is placed under a Mediatorship : offers of mercy and of grace are made to the sinner, who is responsible for his reception or rejection of such offers. Opportunities are, therefore, and must be, given for man to decide upon such acceptance or rejection ; and at once we have the necessary

fact of probation. But Divine patience and long suffering are essential to probation ; and thus we see that the forbearance which God exercises toward a sinner is fundamental in that gracious economy under which we live, for without such forbearance there could be no probation, and without probation there could be no dealing with man as a moral agent. According to the terms of the evangelical covenant, sin cannot adequately be punished at once. It would be to frustrate His own designs—to do violence to His own arrangements.

Fourthly : *The conduct is abusive of the richest mercy, and the highest privileges of Heaven.*

The dispensation under which we live is full of mercy. God is not willing that man should perish. “He *waiteth* to be gracious.” Hardened men know it not, but the ceaseless “goodness of God” is designed to lead us to repentance. When opportunities have been long abused, they are renewed and renewed, that we may “acquaint ourselves with Him and be at peace.” The voice is again and again heard, “Turn ye at my reproof ;” “Come and let us reason together.” But these privileges, by those who act out the principle of the text, are not only neglected, but despised—nay, turned upon the Benefactor himself—as proof of their deep hostility and ingratitude. Our first, our last, duty is to enquire the will of God, faithfully perform it, and, with the approbation of a good conscience, to look, by faith, for the coming of that period when the world’s tribunal shall be erected, and every man shall receive, at the hand of his Judge, according to his deeds.

We pity the blindness and impenitence of the antediluvians, who, in spite of the warnings of a righteous God, brought down the death-floods of a wakened wrath ;—but ours is a more fearful portion ; and a bitterer verdict awaits us, if, “because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, our hearts are more fully set in us to do evil.”

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SUBJECT :—*Nature an Auxiliary to the Gospel.*

“ All things were created by him (Christ), and for him.”—Col. i. 16.

Analysis of *Homily the Two Hundred and Sixteenth.*

IF we speak of nature as a book, it is older than the volume of revelation. On the page of nature Christ wrote certain great truths before the Bible had an existence. It was through nature that man was first taught the beneficence and wisdom of his Creator. The scenery of Eden furnished the first lessons concerning God : it suggested to Adam his loftiest thoughts of his Maker, and awakened his warmest emotions towards Him. But sin has blinded man's mind, and thus has partially dimmed the page of nature. Still the traces of truth are sufficiently clear to make men responsible for their ignorance of God, even if no other revelation had been granted. “ For the invisible things of him,” &c.

I. THE SCRIPTURES WERE GIVEN TO MEN NOT TO CALL AWAY THEIR ATTENTION FROM THE TEACHINGS OF NATURE. On the contrary, they tell us that “ The heavens declare the glory of God,” &c. ; and they bid us “ consider the wondrous works of God.” Not only does the Gospel reveal to us a new form or manifestation of God's love ; not only does it teach truths which nature does *not*, and was *never meant*, to teach—such as our Lord's *incarnation*—*atonement*—*resurrection*, and *intercession*—but it also sheds on nature a light, by which we get at the meaning of what she does not teach concerning God. The inspired writers speak of creation as no heathen authors did. On the polished page of many ancient classic are found odes to nature—descriptions of her beauty, and disquisitions on her uses—but they are trifling and tame beside the life-like delineations and lofty reflections which are preserved in the rolls of the old Hebrew prophets. There is, too, in all they write on nature, a distinct and full recognition of God's hand in every object, and

God's presence in every spot, for which you look in vain in the ancient writers, who were not moved by the Holy Ghost. It is only in the Bible we are taught that "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," &c.;—that the light is His garment, the clouds are His chariot, and that He walketh upon the wings of the wind;—that He "measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, meted out heaven with the span," &c.;—"broke up for the sea its decreed place, and set bars and doors, saying, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." This is the light which the Scripture sheds upon nature; and by contemplating her in it, her works become suggestive of thoughts that connect our souls with God. In this way did nature affect the writers of Scripture. David said, "When I consider thy heavens," &c. Ay, a greater than David had said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow," &c. It is in no strain of *mere deism* that Scripture speaks of nature, but tells us that by CHRIST all things were created, and also *for* Him. So that nature is as much the product of my Saviour as redemption; and His Spirit who renews our hearts is the same who, in the beginning, "moved upon the face of the waters." To every Christian, then, nature must be *meant* to suggest thoughts of Christ. Between nature and the Gospel there is, and can be, no antagonism;—both owe their existence to the same Author. We have no sympathy with those who reject the Gospel, and speak only of nature's works, as if they were the *sole* utterances of God's mind to men: neither have we any sympathy with them that ignore nature, and confine themselves exclusively to the Gospel, as if nature had no message from above. I demur, therefore, to do as some do—separate nature and revelation, or set the one against the other. *Both* preach to me, though in different forms, the wisdom, the power, and the love of Him who made me, and with His own "precious blood" redeemed me, and listen to them both I ought. The same Divine voice which addresses man in the Gospel, also speaks to him in the rippling

of the brook and the rustling of the forest's leaves. He who, in Scripture, denounces the workers of iniquity, also utters His terrors in the thunder. He who died for men's sins, and rose again to intercede for them, "renews the face of the earth." It is His hand that gives to every flower the grace of its form, and the delicacy of its tints; that gives to the cedar its stateliness, and to the oak its strength; that clothes the valleys with corn, and drapes the mountain summits in mist, and shrouds them in snow. His taste fashions every cloud that floats, gilds the horizon at dawn, and paints every sunset. The moon walks the heavens in brightness at His command; and the stars that gleam like jewels on the brow of night, were all kindled by Him.

Ought any Christian, then, to look without concern on these works of his Saviour's hand? Why does the Gospel tell us that "all things were created by Him, and for Him," if it be not that creation should awaken in our minds the deepest interest, and bring Him ever to our remembrance? Why has He made the more conspicuous objects in creation so varied and attractive? Why is there such an extensive blending of utility with beauty? Look at the sun!—his rays not only cause the waters of the deep to rise in vapours to fructify with showers the earth, and baptize with dew-drops the fragile flowers and the tender grass, but they gild the ocean and the rivers till every wave and ripple dazzle with resplendent beauty. Look, too, on the clouds!—they are the reservoirs of the sky; yet you often see them hanging on the horizon like drapery of crimson and gold. That crimson or gold is not needed to impart any wholesome influence to the air, or prolific power to the rain. For all the ends of utility, these clouds might have been woven into one vast, shapeless, and murky mass, covering the whole face of heaven. Why, then, are they fashioned into many graceful forms, and dyed with many delicate hues, if not to present images of beauty to the eye of man? If you turn next to the rivers and lakes, you see them not only imparting freshness and life along their banks, but mirroring on their

bright bosoms the mountain scenery around them, and the calm beauty of the heavens that smile above them. Now, why all this if not to attract the notice and excite the emotions, of man? Sympathy with what is sublime and lovely in the outer world has an elevating tendency on the heart within. As the poet truthfully says,—

“Before every man the world of beauty,
Like a great artist, standeth night and day
With patient hand, retouching in the heart
God’s defaced image.”

Yes; if God teaches by nature, it must be for the same end as He teaches by Scripture—to win man’s affections to Himself. It is true that nature never can renew a depraved heart;—that belongs to the Holy Ghost. But when the heart has been renewed, nature is then read in a new light by those who study her wonders, and thus becomes an auxiliary to the Gospel. Experience has taught that, until man’s heart has been softened by the grace of Christ, nature’s lessons of her Creator’s love will never be understood and prized. Nature can never be a substitute for the “glorious Gospel of the blessed God;” but she may be, and *ought* to be, its handmaid. Every Christian has, in his faith of the Gospel, a key to the true interpretation of nature; and it is both his duty and privilege to try and read the meaning of that book of illustrations, all drawn and coloured by the hand of Christ. In the Gospel God’s love is addressed to our *faith*. It is by *believing* in His love, through Christ, that we are saved. In nature the Divine love is addressed to our *senses*. It is by *looking* on the works of nature—by *listening* to her many melodies, and by *inhaling* the freshness and fragrance which float on every breeze that sweeps across garden and meadow—that our impressions are received of God’s “tender mercies being over all His works.” Both our faith and our senses are avenues to our hearts, and therefore God uses both for purifying and gladdening these hearts. One of the blessings which belief of the Gospel imparts is ability

to read the inscriptions of Divine wisdom and love, which are written on every part of creation. That Christian, then, stands greatly in his own light who uses not that blessing.

II. BUT AS HIS WORD LEADS OUR THOUGHTS OFTEN TO NATURE, NATURE SHOULD LEAD OUR THOUGHTS OFTEN TO HIS WORD. For this she is clearly intended and thoroughly adapted. Is the morning light, as it ascends above the horizon, and spreads itself softly and silently over hill and plain, not fitted to awaken thoughts of the "Sun of righteousness arising with healing in his wings?" Can you look at the rainbow spanning the heavens, and not think of a "better covenant" than the one of which it was appointed to be the sign? Can you watch the billows of the stormy deep, and their roaring might suggest no thoughts of Him who "is mightier than the noise of many waters; yea, than the mighty waves of the sea?" &c. But we need not multiply instances of nature's *fitness* to suggest thoughts, and awaken emotions, which tend to draw the Christian closer to his Saviour and God. Every thoughtful believer in the Lord Jesus Christ must know it well. Let us all, beloved brethren, learn it more. Associate all the grandeur and beauty that meet the eye with Him who redeemed us. Let every object that can delight your senses remind you of Christ, and keep all your thoughts of Him fresh as the breezes of the morning, and fragrant as the breath of spring. Remember that the Book which makes known His "great salvation" disdains not to speak also of the "light of the sun"—the "dews of heaven"—"green pastures"—"still waters"—"great mountains"—"valleys covered with corn"—the "rose of Sharon," and the "lilies of the field"—the "oaks of Bashan," and the "cedars of Lebanon." Yea, it speaks of all that is majestic and lovely in creation; and surely what the Book of life is not slow to use as illustrations of its quickening truths, no believer in these truths need be afraid to contemplate often. The tendency of the Gospel is to inspire all who receive it with love for the works of nature, and whoever resists this

tendency deprives himself of rich enjoyments which Christ himself has sanctioned. If he rejoices in the works of his own hands, has he not in this, as in every other thing which is good, "left us an example, that we should follow in His steps?"

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SUBJECT :—*The Mental History of Conversion.*

"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus." Gal. i. 15—17.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Seventeenth.

THIS is an autobiographic sketch of one of the most important epochs in the mental history of one of the most remarkable men, that ever appeared on this earth. He was a native of Tarsus, of Jewish descent. He was brought up to the trade of a tent-maker; and about the age of fourteen he proceeded to Jerusalem, to prosecute his studies under Gamaliel, a celebrated teacher of Jewish literature and law. He comes under our notice first as an accessory to the martyrdom of Stephen; and, before Agrippa, he gives a full account of the occasion and extraordinary circumstances which marked his conversion. The passage before us may enable us, in some measure, to illustrate the mental history of a sinner's conversion to the religion of Christ.

I. CONVERSION IS INITIATED BY AN INWARD REVELATION OF CHRIST. "Revealed his Son in me." What is it to have Christ revealed *in* one? (1.) It is something more than to have him revealed to the *senses*. Christ came within the sphere of the apostles' senses;—they saw, heard, and touched Him. He is brought to the *senses* of many now in sculpture, painting, sensuous hymns, and animal preaching.

(2.) It is something more than to have Him revealed to the *understanding*. A logical knowledge of Christ—*theology*—is not an inward revelation of Christ. There is a striking difference between the living and lovely Christ of the Gospel, and the dead and uninteresting Christ of *theology*. The human heart loathes the Christ of *theology*. He is there, as the lovely rose, analyzed, decomposed, and made offensive by chemistry. (3.) It is something more than to have Him revealed in the *conscience*. He may be so represented to men that, like the sinners of old, they may say, "We find no fault in Him." Infidels approve and admire His character. What is it to have Him revealed *in you*? It is to have Him felt in the soul as the *supreme good*—the supreme truth for the intellect, the supreme right for the conscience, the supreme beauty for the heart—so that all the powers of the soul centre in Him;—all the emotions flow towards Him.

II. THIS INWARD REVELATION OF CHRIST IS IMPARTED BY THE AGENCY OF GOD. "When it pleased God," &c. That God did this in the apostle's case was exceedingly obvious. (1.) It could not be referred to his predisposition of mind. His whole soul was against Christ. (2.) It could not be referred to his educational training. His education, as a Pharisee, was against Christ. (3.) It could not be referred to the agency of any Christian teacher. No one seems to have preached to Paul. In his case, therefore, it was most manifestly the agency of God. He has two thoughts about this agency.

First: *It was predetermined*. "Separated me from my mother's womb." When I was not—when I was nothing to the universe, and the universe was nothing to me—God ordained this for me. From the heartless and impious predestination of some would-be Calvinists the enlightened reason and the refined heart recoil with horror, but the predestination of Paul is congruous with both. Philosophy finds predestination everywhere in nature:—in the floating dew-

drop and the heaving oceans ; in the motions of atoms and the revolutions of stars ; in the organization, growth, and decay of every species of plant, and every class of sentient life. As a devout man, had Paul written about astronomy, or botany, or anatomy, he would not have done what our modern pseudo-philosophers do—resolved all into abstractions which they call laws—the resting-place of ignorance—but to the *predestination* of God. But he wrote about salvation ; and, as a devout man, he traced this good thing to the purpose of God. Secondly : *It was gracious*. “Called me by his grace.” Sovereign love was alone the impulse. “Not by works of righteousness,” &c.

III. THIS AGENCY OF GOD IS VOUCHSAFED FOR THE PURPOSE THAT CHRIST MIGHT BE PREACHED. Why did God reveal His Son in Paul ? Hear his answer :—“That I might preach amongst the heathen,” &c. (1.) Men are not converted to Christ merely for their own sake. As an object of Divine influence, man is not an end, but a means. Man, like all things in the universe, is to transmit what he receives from God. The light which heaven kindles in the soul must not be put under a bushel. (2.) Men who are not converted to Christ are not qualified to preach Him. He must be revealed *in* a man before a man can rightly reveal Him to others. Paul could not preach Christ until Christ came into his soul. If great ability, learning, enthusiasm, could have qualified him to preach Christ, he was qualified before this inward revelation. God alone knows the evils that have resulted from an unconverted pulpit. It has been a cloud upon the bright sun of Christianity, obscuring and chilling its genial rays ; a miasma, in its atmosphere breathing death into souls ; discordant notes in its sounds, disgusting the ears of men.

IV. THE TRUE PREACHING OF CHRIST IS PROMPTED BY THAT INDIVIDUAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF DUTY WHICH MAKES THE SOUL SUPERIOR TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS. “Immedi-

ately I conferred not with flesh and blood," &c. (1.) He was independent of carnal considerations. "Flesh and blood." If he had consulted his carnal interests, he never would have preached Christ. He knew that, by preaching Christ, he should lose all his worldly possessions, friends, prospects, and incur, at the same time, the opposition of the world. But he did not do so. "*Immediately.*" Seconds thoughts are not always best;—never best when the soul is thoroughly alive to duty. (2.) He was independent of the opinions of the best of men. "Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles," &c. I did not go and ask even the *apostles* what I should do; my conscience told me. A divinely enlightened conscience will make us independent even of the best of men.

V. THIS INDIVIDUAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF DUTY, THOUGH IT MAKES THE SOUL SUPERIOR TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS, STILL ALLOWS FULL SCOPE FOR THE PLAY OF ITS DISCRETIONARY REASON. "I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem," &c. Why not have commenced preaching at Jerusalem at once? or why not have gone back at once to Jerusalem, to consult with the apostles? He must have had some individual reasons for this somewhat strange course of conduct. (1.) By going first into Arabia he probably secured peculiar advantages for that study which would prepare him for future usefulness. In that obscure angle of the world, amid the quiet hills and valleys, in the suggestive solitudes of nature, in her wild and picturesque aspects, he would have a fine opportunity for reflection. Probably here he had those visions referred to in 2 Cor. xii. The greater and holier the mind of a minister is, the more he will feel the necessity for study. But doubtless Paul preached as well as studied in Arabia;—preached to the wandering tribes of Ishmael. The kings of Sheba and Seba perhaps heard his voice. (2.) By going then to Damascus, he would go with increased qualification to the scenes where he had persecuted, to proclaim the

Gospel;—thereby convincing all of the reality of his conversion. (3.) By not returning to Jerusalem for three years after he had been preaching the Gospel, there would be ample proof afforded of his position, that he had neither received the Gospel from man, neither was he taught it by man, “but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Had he gone at once to Jerusalem, it might have been said that he received the Gospel from the other apostles; but being distant from Jerusalem some hundred and fifty miles, for three years after his conversion, it would be evident that he received his commission directly from the Lord.

SUBJECT :—*The Blessedness of the True.*

“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according unto the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”—Philip. iii. 20, 21.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Eighteenth.

THE word *πολίτευμα*, which occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, does not mean either *speech* or *conduct*, but citizenship. This being the meaning, there are two things in the text which show the blessedness of a true Christian.

I. HE IS A CITIZEN OF THE HIGHEST STATE. He is a citizen of heaven. But how can this be? He is not in heaven. Heaven may be millions of leagues away. Be it so: citizenship is not necessarily dependent upon distance. The antipodes are citizens of the same commonwealth as ourselves. Two things make us citizens of a state:—(1.) That we be ruled by its laws. The true Christian is ruled by the laws of heaven—the *laws of love*. Those laws are called “the law of truth”—“the law of righteousness”—“the law of the spirit of life”—“the royal law”—“the law

of liberty." All these expressions are full of significance. The Christian is ruled by these heavenly laws. (2.) That we be invested with its rights. What are the rights which a good government secures to obedient citizens? First: *Protection*. Secondly: *Liberty*. Thirdly: *Facilities for advancement*. Heaven secures all these to its citizens.

II. HE IS A SUBJECT OF THE HIGHEST HOPES. Not only is he now a citizen of heaven, enjoying all its rights, but he is "looking" for something higher and nobler. "We look for the Saviour." Two things come within the realm of his hope:—(1.) The most glorious manifestation. He looks for the Saviour. This attitude of his mind implies four things:—A belief that the Saviour is somewhere in existence;—a conviction that there is a period when He will appear;—a consciousness of a preparedness to meet Him;—an assurance that such a manifestation is desirable. All these things are implied in this looking. (2.) The most glorious transformation. "Who shall change our vile bodies," &c. "Vile";—not *normally* vile, either in their organization or functions, but vile because of the diseases to which they are subject, and the undue influence which their appetites have obtained over the intellect, conscience, and soul. But here is a glorious transformation! Observe two things:—The *model*: "His glorious body." The *agency*: "According to the working," &c.

SUBJECT :—*Time a Property.*

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil," &c.—Eph. v. 16.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Nineteenth.

I. TIME IS A PROPERTY WORTH REDEMPTION. There are some things not so. There are four circumstances which give value to a thing. First: *Scarcity*. Diamonds and gold are valuable on this account; so is time. The present moment is our all. Secondly: *The estimation of competent*

judges. Things worthless in themselves, even books, if they have received a high judgment from recognised judges, become valuable. Time is valuable on this account. What say the best of men? "Teach us to number our days," &c. What said Christ? "I must work," &c. What says the Spirit? "To-day," &c. Thirdly: *The amount of its cost.* If much money or labor have been given for a thing, it becomes valuable. Man's time cost the life of Christ. Fourthly: *The use it can be turned to.* If you can make a thing, not valuable in itself, serve an important purpose, it becomes precious. What use can time be turned to? What wonderful things can be wrought out of a solitary hour! "Everlasting life," &c.

II. TIME IS A PROPERTY CAPABLE OF REDEMPTION. Otherwise we should not be commanded to do so. How can past time be redeemed? (1.) Not by regaining any portion of it. The past is irrevocably gone. (2.) Not by inoperative regrets concerning the wrong of the past. (3.) Not by mere sentimental desire that the future may be better. How then? First: By deducing the true moral lessons of the past. Secondly: By a deep and devout determination to avoid all the evils of the past in all the days of the future.

III. TIME IS A PROPERTY REQUIRING REDEMPTION. "Because the days are evil." Days, in themselves, have no necessary tendency to make us better, but rather worse. Therefore we must work. There are several evils in these days that should stimulate us to the right use of time. First: *Worldly influence.* How mercenary is our age! Secondly: *Sacerdotal influence.* Men believe in baptismal regeneration, &c. Thirdly: *Philosophical influence.* Anti-theism, against God.—Anti-supernaturalism, against the Bible—Anti-propitiationalism, against the atonement of Christ. All these are at work. Fourthly: *Satanic influence.* This is in all the rest.

Dogmas Tested by Reason and Scripture.

INTRODUCTORY.

What Dogma is:

IN order to form a correct notion of any particular object, it is generally helpful to distinguish it from others with which it is liable to be confounded. Now Dogma is to be carefully distinguished from *Christian Truth*. This is the food of the soul. It addresses itself to the higher mind of man, to the affections and the will—to which it imparts vitality, and then sustains the vitality it imparts. A Christian is a man who has a vitality imparted and sustained by Christian truth, which he appropriates; who, in Scripture phrase, “eats the flesh of the Son of Man, and drinks His blood, and thus has life in him.”

Dogma is further to be distinguished from *Biblical Theology*, whose function it is, by means of the historical method, to describe the organism of Christian truth, as actually developed in the successive economies of revelation as recorded in the various books of Scripture; and also from *Christian Theology*, properly so called, which also uses the historical method; but which—abandoning chronology, and effecting a *logical* re-distribution of the various parts—constructs a new organism as complete as the limits of revelation permits.

Philosophical Theology, moreover, occupies itself with the foundations of the preceding, exhibits the evidence of revelation, deduces consequences from its doctrines, and shows their relations to the doctrines of philosophy.

Not one of these is Dogma. The notion of this is relative, and always implies the Church, or a church, or a sect. That which is professed and taught by any one of these as its creed, or symbol, or confession, or catechism, is its Dogma, and any portion of these is also so called. There was a time when the Church was one, and there was unity and uniformity in Dogma—but this time was short; and now every church and every party has its own system of Dogma—high church and low church, broad church and narrow church, hard church and soft church, and so on to the end.

In Dogma we distinguish two things—the substantial element and the logical form. The former ought to be divine; the latter is generally human. In different churches there is often a variation in both matter and form, and sometimes the one may be the same while only the other varies, and thus there be more unity than there seems.

Absolute correctness in Dogma not essential.

Although, in order to be a Christian, a man must appropriate that which is characteristic and essential in Christian Truth, yet the Christian character may, and very often does, exist, and attain a high degree of excellence, independent of logic. To insist that the bread of life, in order to nourish the soul, must be precisely cut into regular solids—pyramids, cubes, and octahedrons, is to fly in the face of reason and fact. Full many a clown has enjoyed excellent health, who never understood anatomy and medicine, and has had “an entrance ministered to him abundantly into the kingdom of heaven,” though he never clothed his creed in any tolerable logical form. Fletcher of Madeley, though holding the Protestant dogmas, will hardly be denied by the candid Roman Catholic to be a sweet Christian; and candid Protestants, on the other hand, will allow as much of Fenelon, though holding the Popish dogmas.

Use of Dogma.

Yet each of the two parts of Dogma has its lawful use, and the first and essential part has a very high and sacred one. It is the calling of the Church to “bear witness to the truth”; it is the duty of the ministry to “give every man his portion of meat”; to furnish “babes” with “the sincere milk of the word.” But in compassing these ends, the Church often finds it necessary to use very precise language; and sometimes the greater the scientific exactness, the more efficient the teaching; for man has not only spiritual insight, but a logical understanding. The former may be aided by the latter, and the Gospel be made to address itself to both.

Abuse of Dogma.

When the substance of Dogma has been entirely drawn from revelation, it is genuine; and there attaches to it a secondary authority based on that of Scripture. But when, either from the floating opinions of the Church which teaches it, or from any system of philosophy, a foreign element has been imported, there arises corruption of Dogma. That both of these have in fact been done, a man has only to read the history of Dogma to be convinced.

Again, when the logical form is put forth as authoritative, and made binding on the conscience; when, for the sake of mere conceptional variations, true Christians are unrecognised and persecuted; when church is set against church; such procedure is anomalous, uncatholic, unchristian, and absurd;—and in proportion as it is adopted by any church, that church loses its catholicity, and becomes schismatical, “teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.” This applies even where the substance of the dogma is sound. The

abuse is double when the substance of the dogma is corrupt—a mere heresy. Dogma has, in fact, proved the great antagonist of catholicity.

How we mean to deal with Dogma.

We purpose essaying in a series of articles, to which these remarks are introductory, an arduous work in respect of Dogma. We intend making a selection of chief and current dogmas; to state each fairly and plainly; then examine both its substance and form—to ascertain whence it has been derived, and whether it be sound or corrupt; then whether the form in which it appears be fitting or injurious—giving, in conclusion, what appears to be the teaching of revelation on each subject, and in a form suited to the necessities of the mind. The difficulties of the task are great. Stimulus and encouragement are furnished by the wants of the age, the conscious desire of usefulness, and the reflection that even a measure of success would be a proportional service to the churches.

Old Standards and New;

OR,

GENUINE AND SHAM ORTHODOXY.

JOHN OWEN.

“———— no more like my father
Than I to Hercules.”

It is proposed to give a series of articles with the above title, to show what were, on certain subjects, the real sentiments of the old orthodox divines, and of those in more modern times, who are acknowledged as their genuine disciples. The very words of such divines will be fairly laid before the discerning and candid reader—we trust the breed is not extinct—who will then be left to form his own judgment. It would be a curious, and not uninteresting, result to find such divines considerably characterized with what

the modern unread sciolist calls heresy, when he strives to excite ignorant prejudice, confounds weak understandings, and shows, to his own satisfaction, that white is black. We begin with John Owen, and some of his sentiments.

“i. ON THE NATURE OF INSPIRATION. He did, as it were, *gently* and softly breathe* into them the knowledge and comprehension of holy things. It is an especial and immediate work, wherein *he acts suitably unto his nature as a spirit*, the spirit or breath of God; and suitably unto his peculiar personal properties of meekness, gentleness, and peace. So his acting is inspiration, whereby *he came within the faculties of the souls of men*, acting them with a power that was not their own.†

“The reader must take heed that he look not for the peculiar excellencies of Isaiah absolutely in the *words* used by him, but rather in the *things* that it pleased the Holy Ghost to use him as His instrument in the revelation of.‡

“[The Jews] having for a long season lost the promise of the Spirit, and therewith all saving spiritual knowledge of the mind and will of God in the Scripture, the best of their employment about it hath been in reference to the words and letters of it. ————— They go not beyond the letter, but are more blind than moles in the spiritual sense of it.§

“ii. ON THE EVIDENCE OF REVELATION. When the Holy Ghost gave *new revelations* of old unto the prophets and penmen of the Scripture by *immediate inspiration*, *He did therein and therewith communicate unto them an infallible evidence that they were from God.*||

“And if it be asked how I know this Scripture to be a divine revelation, to be the word of God, I answer:—(1) I do not know it demonstratively, upon rational, scientific principles, because such a divine revelation is not capable of such a demonstration (1 Cor. ii. 9). (2.) I do not assent unto it, or think it to be so, only upon arguments and motives highly probable, or morally uncontrollable, as I am assuredly persuaded of many other things whereof I can have no certain demonstration. (1 Thess. ii. 13.) (3.) But I believe it so to be with faith divine and supernatural, resting on and resolved into the authority and veracity of God himself, *evidencing themselves unto my mind, my soul, and conscience, by this revelation itself, and not otherwise.*

“Here we rest, and deny that we believe the Scripture to be the word of God formally *for any other reason but itself*, which assureth us of its divine authority.**

“Luke xvi. 27—31. ————— He who was in hell apprehended

* The italics are mostly ours. † Owen's Works (Gould's Ed.), vol. III., p. 131.

‡ XVIII., 51. § XVIII., 127, 128. || IV. 150. ** IV., 70, 71.

that nothing would make them believe but a miracle, one rising from the dead and speaking unto them; which, or the like marvellous operations, many at this day think would have mighty power and influence upon them to settle their minds and change their lives. Should they see one "rise from the dead," and come and converse with them, this would convince them of the immortality of the soul, of future rewards and punishments, as giving them sufficient evidence thereof, so that they would assuredly repent and change their lives; but as things are stated, they have no sufficient evidence of these things, so that they doubt so far about them as that they are not really influenced by them. *Give them but one real miracle, and you shall have them for ever. This, I say, was the opinion and judgment of him who was represented as in hell, as it is of many who are posting thither apace. He who was in heaven thought otherwise; wherein we have the immediate judgment of Jesus Christ given in this matter, determining this controversy.**

"iii. ON HUMAN NATURE. Under the ashes of our collapsed nature there are yet remaining certain sparks of *celestial fire*.†

"In the transactions between God and the souls of men, with respect unto their obedience and salvation, there is none of them but hath a *power* in sundry things, as to some degrees and measures of them, to comply with his mind and will, which they voluntarily neglect.‡

"The Spirit of God continually exerts some secret and hidden operation in the rule and government of the world.§

"iv. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. He took to Himself the *nature* of all men, and not the *person* of any man.||

"The Papists have made a vain controversy about the knowledge of the human soul of Christ. Those whom they charge with error in this matter affirm no more than what is expressly asserted in Scripture;** and by their answers it is evident how little they care what scorn they expose the Scripture and all religion unto, so that they may secure their own mistakes. — The revelation by which God spake in him was in a peculiar manner from the Father. (Rev. i. 1.)

"Some lay the whole weight of the revelation of the will of God unto Christ, upon the endowments of His human nature, by virtue of its union with the eternal Word. But this is wholly inconsistent with the many testimonies, before rehearsed, of *the Father's revealing himself unto Him after that union*. — He spake in Him by His Spirit; so He did in the prophets of old.††

"v. THE DEATH OF CHRIST. The agent in, and chief author of, this great work of our redemption is *the whole blessed Trinity*; for all the

* IV., 75, 76. † III., 345. ‡ III., 290. § III., 248. || XX., 445.

** Luke ii. 52. Matt. xxiv. 36. Mark xiii. 32. †† XX., 28—31.

works which outwardly are of the Deity are undivided, and belong equally unto each person.*

"Heb. ix. 14. That which some contend, that by 'the Eternal Spirit' is here meant our Saviour's own Deity, I see no great ground for. — He offered himself in his human nature by the Holy Ghost. — By Him was He filled with that *love and compassion* — there was wrought in Him that *zeal unto the glory of God* — such *holy submission unto the will of God* — that faith and trust in God.†

"By His oblation we do not design only the particular offering of Himself upon the cross an offering to His Father, as the Lamb of God, without spot or blemish, when He bears our sins, or carried them up with him in His own body on the tree, *which was the sum and complement of His oblation* and that wherein it did chiefly consist; but also *His whole humiliation*, or state of emptying Himself, whether by yielding voluntary obedience unto the law, as being made under it, that He might be the end thereof to them that believe (Rom. x. 4); or by His subjection to the curse of the law, *in the antecedent misery and suffering of life*, as well as by submitting to death—the death of the cross: *for no action of His as Mediator is to be excluded from a concurrence to make up the whole means in this work.*

"vi. CHRIST'S RESURRECTION AND INTERCESSION. Neither by His intercession do I understand only that heavenly appearance of His in the holy place, for the applying to us all good things purchased and procured by His oblation; *but also every act of His exaltation* conducing thereto, from His resurrection to His 'sitting down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, angels, and principalities, and powers, being made subject unto Him.' *Of all which His resurrection, being the basis, as it were, and the foundation of the rest* — is especially to be considered as that to which a great part of the effect is often ascribed; for 'He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification' (Rom. iv. 25); where, and in such other places, by His resurrection, *the whole following dispensation, and the perpetual intercession of Christ for us in heaven is intended.*"‡

Such extracts might be indefinitely multiplied; but the reader may now be supposed sufficiently imprest with the fearful heresies of John Owen. We shall soon not know whom to trust; for, according to your modern standards, an arch-heretic John Owen assuredly is. The above sentiments are precisely such as, when uttered in the phrase of the present day, it is the fashion to call mystic.

But which is the true heretic—John Owen or the modern

* X., 163.

† X., 178; XXIII., 305.

‡ X., 179, 180.

unread sciolist? And whose are the fathers? Who is it that has really departed from the old Puritan faith—the so-called mystic who utters the above sentiments in the idiom of the nineteenth century, or his accuser, who, amid the whirl of affairs, has managed to patch up a hearsay orthodoxy of his own? We earnestly recommend the latter to the careful study of the works of John Owen.

Stars of Christendom.

TERTULLIAN.

THE Mind which determines the condition and history of nations, proceeding after a method whose stately and orderly steps are laid out for our admiration in the past, but cannot be foreseen, placed in the Mediterranean Sea in the midst of the group of the leading countries of the ancient world. Before the ripe boldness of navigation, or the advent of rapid movement on land, this famous Sea at once separated and connected the nations on its shores, and proximity thereto was the condition of notoriety and share in the affairs of the world. The North, the East, the South, and the West, knew each other by this easy means of intercourse: commerce and government, letters and religion, were made common by the wave; Spain, Gaul, Italy, Greece, Phœnicia, Palestine, Egypt, and the rest of Northern Africa—were brought together; and though of three different continents, were mutually more intimate than to their own North, and East, and South. It mattered little to a forcible nature on which side of this assimilating sea was his immediate sojourn; his overpowering energy would surely flow around the circling races, and through them reach the modern world.

Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus was born in resuscitated Carthage, now forgetting her old humiliation, about the year 160. But inasmuch as our chief source of information for the facts of his life is a short account by Jerome,* we can hardly do better than transcribe it. "Tertullian, a presbyter, is now reckoned, after Victor and Apollonius, the first of the Latins. He was born in the province of Africa, in the city of Carthage. His father was a pro-consular centurion. He was a man of an eager and vehement temper; flourished chiefly in the time of the emperors Severus and Antonius Caracalla; and wrote a great number of books, which, because they are generally known, I omit. I have seen one Paul of Concordia, which is a small town in Italy, then an old man, who said that, when he was very young, he had seen the secretary of the blessed Cyprian, then of a great age; and that he was wont to tell him that not a day passed but Cyprian† read something in Tertullian; and that he would often say to him, 'Give me my master,' meaning Tertullian. When he had continued a Presbyter of the Church till about the middle part of his age, on account of the envy and reproaches of the clergy of the Roman Church, he went over to the sect of Montanus; and in many of his books makes mention of that new prophecy. Several books especially were composed by him against the Church, as these: Of Chastity, Of Persecution, Of Fasts, Of Monogamy [against second marriages], Of Ecstasy, in six books, to which he added a seventh, written against Appolonius. He is said to have lived to an extreme old age [*usque ad decrepitam aetatum*]; and to have written many books besides those which are now extant."

A few other facts may be collected. It seems that he was not trained in Christianity, but in Paganism. But the time of his conversion cannot be ascertained. The church in which he was a presbyter was probably that of Carthage. It is certain that he was married, and his wife seems to have been much younger than himself. He avowed Montanism probably about his forty-fifth year. He died about the year 245.

As a theologian, Tertullian occupies a very high position among the Latin Fathers. Next to Augustin, he has the

* Hieron. De Viris Illustr., 53.

|| Made bishop of Carthage 248; died 258.

most influence, and his spirit characterizes the theology of the West. He dwells with partiality on the same side of Christianity which was the delight of Cyprian and then of Augustin. To this he was doubtless led by the particular process of his own religious development. He appears in contrast with the Alexandrian school, both in his general exhibition of the faith, and in dealing with heretics. Clement and Origen reasoned; Tertullian dogmatized. They were in danger on the side of speculation, he on that of fanaticism. They imbibed much of the spirit of the Gnostics; he finally avowed Montanism. The Catholics and Tertullian moved in opposite directions with regard to Montanism. The Church, having once been inclined to favour it, moved off, and appeared in opposition, while Tertullian was more and more attracted by it. A short account of Montanism will here be in place.

Montanism appears in the early history of the Church as a system directly opposed to Gnosticism—clinging to the facts of Christianity, and to the bare Church dogmas; looking for the personal reign of Christ in the Millennium; setting up fanatical claims to inspiration; and enforcing the most rigid and austere discipline. It arose in Phrygia, in the latter part of the second century. Montanus was an obscure person who professed the prophetic character, and was associated with two prophetesses, Priscilla and Maximilla. Of this system Tertullian became an adherent, not merely for the reason mentioned above by Jerome, but because it coincided with his tendencies. He appears as its intelligent advocate and expounder; and as he retained general respect, through him it influenced powerfully many of the most distinguished teachers of the Catholic Church, and through them permanently modified the Christianity of the West.

Tertullian was of a gloomy and austere spirit, but full of fiery impulse and fervent imagination. His reasoning is smart rather than exact or clear, and dazzles rather than convinces. His judgment is not to be trusted, but his overmastering mind moves with surprising celerity and dexterous boldness. He had immense learning. Though his style is unpolished, it is majestic, impetuous, and powerful, being very attractive to the ripe reader. The tongue of Cicero writhes and struggles in his grasp, an insufficient organ for the fresh, massive conceptions, the passionate dogmatism, of this great rugged Punic Christian teacher.

Vincent of Lerins, in the fifth century, writes* thus of Tertullian :—“Turtullian was among the Latins what Origen was among the Greeks ; that is to say, the first and the most considerable man they had. In a word, Is there any author more knowing and better versed both in ecclesiastic and profane learning ? Has he not comprised in his vast and prodigious memory all the philosophy of the sages, the maxims of the different sects, with their histories and what else belonged to them ? Did he ever undertake to attack anything, which he has not always either pierced with the vivacity of his wit, or overthrown by the force and weight of his reasonings ? And who can sufficiently extol the beauties of his discourse, which is so well guarded, and linked together by a continual chain of arguments, that he even forces the consent of those whom he cannot persuade ? His words are so many sentences, his sentences so many victories, as has been sufficiently experienced by the Marcions, the Apelleses, the Praxeases, the Hermogeneses, the Jews, the Gentiles, the Gnostics, and a great many others, whose blasphemies he has silenced by great numbers of books, that have been as so many thunderbolts which have reduced them to ashes. And yet, though he had all these advantages, he did not continue in the ancient and universal faith of the Church, and he has proved himself less faithful than eloquent.”

Balzac, whose judgment of style can hardly be regarded lightly, thus writes† to Rigaltius, the editor :—“I am looking for the Tertullian which you are publishing, that he may teach me that patience for which he gives such admirable instructions. He is an author to whom your Preface would have reconciled me if I had had an aversion for him, and if the harshness of his expressions and the vices of his age had dissuaded me from reading him. But I have had an esteem for him for a long time ; and hard and crabbed as he is, yet he is not at all unpleasant to me. I have found in his writings that Black Light which is mentioned in one of the ancient poets ; and I look upon his obscurity with the same pleasure as upon that of ebony which is very bright and neatly wrought. This has always been my opinion. As the beauties of Africa are not less amiable, though they are not like ours, and as Sophonisba has eclipsed several

*Commonit., cap. 24.

Lettres, V., 2.

Italian ladies, so the wits of that country are not less pleasing with this foreign sort of eloquence; and I shall prefer him before a great many affected imitators of Cicero. Though we should grant to the nicest critics that his style is of iron, yet they must likewise own to us that out of this iron he has forged most excellent weapons; and that he has defended the honour and innocence of Christianity, that he has quite routed the Valentinians, and struck Marcion to the very heart." Thus, then, you have the judgments of an ancient Catholic dogmatist, and of a distinguished modern man of letters.

His best works are his "Apology," which is a masterpiece, and the "Præscription of Heretics," which is a strong attack, not entirely judicious, on heretics in general, and the Gnostics and Marcionites in particular. The title is a term of Roman law.

Even his extant works are too numerous for separate mention. They may be classified according to their subjects; as apologetic, practical, and doctrinal. In all of them are seen more or less of those tendencies which led him to Montanism. Yet, of course, there is a difference between some which were written before his Montanism was decided, and some which were written afterwards. Others, again, are of a transitional character. Yet, though some have endeavoured to trace the boundaries with distinctness, their success has not been satisfactory.

The best editions of Tertullian are those of Parmelius, Rigaltius, and Semler. A very serviceable small edition is that of Leopold, 4 vols. 12mo. Lips.: 1839—41. Tauchnitz.

W. C.

LITERARY NOTICES.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books ; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the Author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

FORM OR FREEDOM. Five Colloquies on Liturgies. Reported by a
MANCHESTER CONGREGATIONALIST. London: Jackson and Wal-
ford.

UNLESS a man have the inspiration of the author of the book of Job or the profundity of Plato, the vigour of Christopher North, or the drollery of Rowland Hill, it is a hazardous experiment to throw what he has to say on any subject into the form of a dialogue. Though this book presents marks of talent, it is a failure in art. The persons are not sufficiently discriminated, and their utterances lack the liveliness which is indispensable to sustain the reader's interest. Furthermore, a small book on a large subject should do one of two things—either give a bird's-eye view of the whole question, or exhaust one of its aspects. This little book does neither. More forcible arguments too, and more forcibly put, may be conceived, both for and against liturgies. Without going formally into the question, one or two thoughts may be suggested. In this, as in every other discussion, proper and well-defined terms are desirable. The very title, "Form or Freedom," is a mis-statement and a begging of the question. In either case you use a form. The question is not, unless you are arguing with Quakers, Shall we use a form? but shall we at all use a liturgy? Again, the advocates of the partial use of a liturgy will tell you that there is as much, or more, freedom in their mode than in the other. It is a law of the mind, that the words employed to express feeling re-act on that feeling. Why not, then, employ the most powerful words? The Bible, it will be admitted on both sides, contains prayers—the fifty-first Psalm for instance—better than any that are now composed. These prayers the individual often uses in his closet, in preference to his own words, and finds them increase instead of abridging his

"freedom." Why should not a congregation? The words of prophets and apostles are ready waiting, like the wings of the Divine Dove, to

—— mount and bear them far above
The reach of these inferior things.

Why refuse these divine helps, and, preferring their own weak limbs, slowly labour along the ground? Which is the true "freedom?" The quotation from Calvin, p. 28, is simply a case of misapprehension. Calvin is not speaking of public worship;—he does not say *cum*, but *coram aliis*. Frankland seems to conceive of public prayer as the disjointed fragmentary prayings of so many isolated units. Is there no "fellowship of the saints" in prayer? A more correct conception is, the undivided praying of the "one body in Christ;" a very different thing from the praying of one "member" in the closet, and a greater and nobler thing than the prayings of many members, *not* in one body, though locally approximated. We protest against the idea that each member should pray as if alone; and we earnestly assert that each should pray *with* his fellow-worshippers—in sympathy with them, and with the full consciousness of their presence and co-operation. The objection of Frankland (pp. 18, 19) to the mixture of prayer with and prayer without a liturgy, has equal force against the reading of Scripture before sermon, where there is the same contrast and the same falling off. With the personalities of pages 22, 23, we have nothing to do; but we defy ingenuity, however great, to enduce "error" from passages of Scripture by mere juxtaposition. In conclusion, we would express our firm conviction—this little book notwithstanding—that Mr. Thomas and his congregation have hold of something very new and very valuable; and to prejudice and suspicion would simply say, *Come and see*.

THE EARNEST MINISTER: A Record of the Life, and Selections from the Posthumous and other Writings of the Rev. Benjamin Parsons, of Ebley, Gloucestershire. Edited by EDWIN PAXTON HOOD. London: Snow.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH: a Biography, by EDWIN PAXTON HOOD. London: Cash.

Two biographies by the same author, but of widely different men. The first was a worthy Christian minister, who faithfully served God and men, at Ebley, near Stroud, in Gloucestershire, for thirty years.

The title, "Earnest Minister," is appropriate to the man. He was also conscious of the rights and duties of a citizen, laboured to diffuse what he considered sound political principle, and was far removed, both in theory and practice, from those who say that ministers of religion should not meddle with politics. Unrestrained by timidity, and not always considerate of those who differed from him, it was not to be expected that this champion of the unwashed should be equally acceptable to the refined. Yet even amongst these were some of his warmest friends, who could see under a rugged outside the genuine manhood, and who now sincerely mourn his loss. It is happy for his memory that he has obtained so well qualified a biographer, and for Mr. Hood that he has found a subject so worthy of his pen. The book gives an interesting narrative of the life, and a faithful portrait of the character, of Mr. Parsons. The papers of Mr. Parsons, in the appendices, have apparently been selected with judgment, and are interesting because they are characteristic. We promise the lovers of unconventional character, and the admirers of sterling worth, fitting entertainment in this volume.

The biography of Wordsworth, though much more pretentious, and in many respects exceedingly pleasing, fails to satisfy. There is a manifest admiration of the hero, which is indispensable to a successful biography; there is unusual talent, and close intimacy with the poems. The fault of the book is a certain feverishness of sentiment and style, which diminishes the reader's confidence. You cannot drive your chariot with either reins or a steel alone. In the former case you will certainly stand still, in the latter you are in great danger of breaking your neck. Beautiful when the impulses, the air, and fire, of your Arab are gently and firmly guided by the calm and prompt dexterity that holds the reins! The great English poet of the first half of this century, the author of the "Ode," and of the "Prefaces," has both Teutonic force and a "Greek love of boundary." His biographer sympathises with the former, but has hardly caught enough of the latter. Though we are not disposed to regard this book as, in every respect, a satisfactory biography, the superior ability of the writer and the illustrious characteristics of his hero, invest it with unusual interest and worth.

GETHESEMANE, AND OTHER POEMS. By THOMAS GALLAND HORTON.
London: Judd and Glass.

LET the Esquimaux gorge himself with seal and train-oil, if he like it, and let the butterfly sip the dew; *de gustibus*, &c. But let not the Esquimaux expect to be considered a butterfly. We have often attempted to define poetry, but could never get further than this—

Poetry is poetry. But we firmly believe in an objective standard. First: Poesy itself has a reality independent of all individual tastes. If the public were to repudiate Homer, Dante, Shakspeare, and the rest, to-morrow, those giants would not shake; for fame does not make the poet, but the poet attracts the homage of fame. Then, again, there is the collective judgment of mankind, which is external and authoritative to the individual, and issues its æsthetic canons. Were a severe judge to try this volume by these canons, we should tremble for the result. There is much that is healthy and powerful in "Gethsemane," but the author is no Klopstock. So there is in "Felix," which is one of those irregular modern entities called dramatic poems. But after all, it may be questioned whether the same lessons might not have been better conveyed in good plain prose. The "Hebrew Odes" are of the contents of the volume the most to *our* taste. The author's rendering is often valuable for the light it throws on the sense of the original, which he has evidently carefully studied; and his ingenuity is, in many cases, very successful in what is always *the* difficulty in such work—namely, effecting an amicable adjustment of the claims of closeness of rendering, and the preservation of the spirit of the original on the one hand, and the poetic forms of the English language on the other. His illustrative notes are also valuable. We should be glad to meet him again in the same field.

THE NATIONAL REVIEW. Numbers V. and VI. London: Chapman and Hall.

THIS young quarterly has, by one leap, taken a place by the side of the most vigorous of its contemporaries. Of its ability there can be no question. We say not so of the trustworthiness of its theologic utterances. As a "*National Review*," its professed aim is a native English theology, since it has a "rooted faith in all indigenous products of thought and feeling." We also believe that the theology of every nation should be cast in the *mould* of its character; but what of the *metal*? Christianity is not "indigenous." Originally Hebrew in her garb, she soon showed as a citizen of the world, assuming the respective costumes of the nations in her healing progress through the universe. We shall watch *The National* with great interest, hoping to see it render that great service to the cause of truth and righteousness which we believe it capable of. These two numbers are rich in attractive articles. We particularly mention "The Gowrie Conspiracy," "Defoe as a Novelist," "Italy," and "Personal Influences on our Present Theology: Newnan—Coleridge—Carlyle," in the latter.

SACRIFICE IN ITS RELATION TO GOD AND MAN. An argument from Scripture. By the Rev. R. FERGUSON, D.D., LL.D. London: Ward and Co.—This essay was read at a meeting of the Hants Association of Independent Pastors and Churches. The subject was suggested by them. The book is published at their request, is dedicated to them, and may fairly be supposed to represent their ideas on the weighty subject. The author has not space for doing this justice, but within his limits treats it with his usual ability, and presents that view of it which is generally reputed orthodox among so-called evangelical churches.—ITALY AS I SAW IT. By W. S. EDWARDS. London: Judd and Glass.—A readable little book, with lively narrative of travel, and feeling description of things which make Italy Italy. Let us hope that the author will so far benefit by his present rambles as soon to resume his ministerial labours.—EXPOSITION OF THE GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, &c. (Abridged by the Author.) For the use of Schools. By JOHN MULLIGAN, A.M. An Abridgment of a Larger Treatise, by the Same Author. London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co.—There is much valuable matter of which the young student should avail himself; yet it seems to us that the boundaries of logic and grammar are not marked with sufficient clearness and decision. A treatise on grammar should not contain long logical expositions. The subjects have, indeed, intimate relations with each other, but are yet quite distinct. A book which is faultless in grammar may be altogether illogical, and *vice versa*.—MESMERISM IN ITS RELATION TO HEALTH AND DISEASE, AND THE PRESENT STATE OF MEDICINE. By WILLIAM NEILSON, Esq. Edinburgh: Shepherd and Elliot.—A good book on the nature and medical importance of Mesmerism, as ascertained in the present state of science, and on the history of it in ancient and modern times. Let the few remaining doubters of the reality of this mysterious influence read and be convinced. Let believers read for instruction.—PARENTAL TEARS WIPED; OR, THE PROSPECT OF MEETING INFANT CHILDREN IN HEAVEN. By the Rev. J. HUGHES, late Missionary in British Guiana.—Liverpool: D. Marples.—A first-class discourse, containing fine thoughts in appropriate language.—SOLACE IN SICKNESS AND SORROW; A COLLECTION OF HYMNS FOR THE AFFLICTED. With an Introductory Preface, by the Rev. BARTON BOUCHIER, A.M. London: J. F. Shaw.—This little volume contains some of the choicest productions of not a few of our sacred poets. It is, indeed, a fountain of healing waters for wounded souls. It will enter many a sick and sorrowful chamber, as an angel from heaven, to strengthen the sufferer.



A HOMILY

ON

Journalism and the Pulpit.

“While men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares.”
Matt. xiii. 25.

My object in this homily is not to gratify the curious with that which is strange, to interest the speculative with ingenious theories, nor to charm literary pleasure-seekers with strokes of humour or eloquence ; but to touch certain points of thought, which may suggest methods and motives for promoting the progress of our race in all that can elevate the intellect, purify the sentiments, and thus ennoble the whole man. Let others mount the chariot of thought as mere sight-seeing and holiday-making excursionists, and sport amidst fairy scenes in the realm of literature and science. I have a practical end, definite and all-engrossing, and on this end I shall endeavour to make all my facts and reasonings bear. Never, brothers—in the ministry of redemptive truth—never did I feel more conscious that I had something great and solemn to urge on your attention. There is a subject pressing on my heart like the “burden of the Lord.” May I deal with it with prophet-like fidelity and power !

Let me now proceed to call your attention to four facts :—

I. THAT NOTHING WHICH EXERCISES AN INFLUENCE UPON THE MORAL CHARACTER OF MANKIND SHOULD BE LOOKED UPON WITH INDIFFERENCE BY MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL.

All who truly believe in Christianity must agree in regarding moral character as of transcendent importance to man. There is no room for debate—no need for argument here. Wealth, fame, learning, are worthless to man in comparison with the spirit that animates him—the principles that govern his life and mould his character. “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.” “Out of the heart are the issues of life.” His ruling disposition is his moral heart—the essence and life of his character. Let that disposition be secular and self-seeking, and whatever worldly honors may be appended to his name, he is essentially mean and degraded ; whatever the magnitude of his wealth, he is essentially “poor, and miserable, and naked.” But let the disposition be spiritual and God-loving, and the man—however obscure his secular condition, or abject his circumstances—is a child of God, and an heir of a blessed immortality. As is, then, a man’s character, so is *he*, and so are the universe and God to him. With true philosophic propriety does Paul call the moral character “man.” The corrupt character is the “old man ;” the holy character is the “new man.” Character is the man. It is an inheritance of the soul, more valuable than empires ; that only of all things which a man carries with him beyond the grave, and which determines his condition through those ages of the future when markets, funds, estates, and thrones, will live only as the dim shadows of memory. In a word, character is that out of which will flame the hell, or bloom the paradise, of every man. A population may be as prosperous, in a worldly sense, as that of Tyre, whose merchants were princes, and as cultivated and refined as that of Athens ; and yet be so morally corrupt as to grieve the spirits of righteous men, and incur the displeasure of Almighty God.

If character is of such importance, then, Are not ministers bound to mark well the agents in society which are the most influential in its formation ? As watchmen, should they not be on the tower, to discover the danger, and sound the alarm ? As physicians, should they not enquire into whatever affects

the health of the patient? As husbandmen, should they not seek to clear the soil of all noxious weeds?

II. THAT OF ALL THE AGENTS AT WORK IN MODERN SOCIETY, THERE IS NOTHING MORE INFLUENTIAL IN THE FORMATION OF MORAL CHARACTER THAN THE NEWSPAPER PRESS. We say modern society, for the newspaper is comparatively a new power in the world. It was not until more than sixteen hundred years had passed away, from the birth of Christ—after Caxton's press had been established in Westminster for a hundred and fifty years—that the first newspaper appeared in the world. "When," to use the language of another, "the reign of James the First was drawing to a close; when Ben Johnson was poet-laureate; when the personal friends of Shakspeare were lamenting his then recent death; when Cromwell was trading as a brewer at Huntingdon: when Milton was a youth of sixteen, just trying his pen at Latin verse; and Hampden a quiet country gentleman; London was first solicited to patronize its first newspaper." (See a brief sketch of the rise and progress of journalism, Appendix *a*.) Two centuries and a quarter have only just expired since those streams of journalism which now wind their way through every street, village, and city, of the Empire—sometimes sparkling with truth and purity, but more frequently muddy and pestiferous with error and licentiousness—had their first fountain opened up in the world. But this power, which has thus so recently risen amongst us, has obtained *regal* authority. Knight Hunt has called it the "Fourth Estate." It is the "fourth" only in order of time. It is unquestionably the *first* in influence and importance. It is the ruler of all. The statesman takes the keynote of his speech, and the spirit of his measure, from the reigning journal. The peer bows his lofty head to its dictates, and even sovereignty regards it as supreme. It forms cabinets and dissolves parliaments; it influences the movements of armies and navies. It can awaken the thunders of war, and it can bring peace. Men, by its permission, hold office; institutions live by its suffrage. In fact,

by dealing directly with the mind and heart of the community, it has its hand on the spring of the whole machinery of our national life. It is the spirit in all the wheels. The newspaper is the dispenser of ideas. And what so mighty as ideas? They are the seed of character, and the soul of history. As they move, the world moves. The individual idea sways the individual man. The national idea is the national sovereign. All the arts that beautify and bless our lives are but ideas that have taken form—plants that have sprung from the germs of thought.

This power of the newspaper press is growing every day, and that because the reading power and taste of the people are increasing. Schools are everywhere being multiplied, and the means of popular education are being rapidly diffused over the land. Ten years hence, and few men or women will be found in this country who have not acquired the art of reading. As the reading power and tastes of the population increase, the dominion of the newspaper will extend. "Before this century," says Lamartine, "shall have run out, journalism will be the whole press—the whole of human thought. Thought will not have time to ripen, to accommodate itself into the form of a book. The book will arrive too late. The only book possible, soon, will be a newspaper."

Now, the grave aspect of this power of journalism to me is, not its influence upon the markets and the politics of the world; but its influence upon the moral heart of the population. What the people read most will be most effective in the formation of their character. That which breathes into us the most thought and sentiment, will exercise upon us the most plastic power. Already the newspaper is the greatest power amongst us. Volumes are becoming obsolete. The journal has become almost the Bible of England. Men who can find no time to read the holy Book of God, find time to read newspapers. They have become a social necessity. Men must have them. Hence their power in the formation of national sentiment and character. As the soft wax receives the figure of the seal, the moral heart of the population is

receiving the impress of our journals. I seriously believe that the journals of England have a wider influence in moulding the moral character of the population than all the pulpits put together. Journalism is at work by day and by night,—in private homes and public reading rooms ; in the counting-houses of merchants, and in the homes of statesmen ; in the cot of the peasant, and in the palace of the prince ; in every village and town throughout the land. It is speaking every hour. Whilst pulpits sleep, the press is ever at work, and sowing tares. As the breath of heaven bears the seeds of autumn to spots where they will germinate and grow, the newspaper often scatters pernicious ideas of life and duty over the masses, where they find a genial soil, and will yield a plentiful harvest of evil in years to come.

III. THAT MODERN JOURNALISM, WHICH IS THUS SO INFLUENTIAL IN THE FORMATION OF CHARACTER, IS MORALLY DELETTERIOUS. In many respects it is all but perfect. In intellectual ability and mechanical skill it scarcely admits of improvement. It employs the first mind of the age—first in native power, and first in literary attainments. Our colleges and universities are nurseries for the journals. No man, however superior his genius, high his culture, distinguished his scholastic honors, or eminent his position, feels too great to write an article for the newspaper ; nay, he esteems it an honor to have his thoughts admitted to its columns. The first men in the church, at the bar, in the senate, and in literature, are found every day narrating, reasoning, or declaiming, in our broad sheets. Here cultured youth, aspiring to the highest office in the state, writes with the poetic fire of its hopeful heart ; and here age writes its ripened lessons of experience. The daring theorist and the adroit man of business are found here. Journalism, in fine, presses into its service, and makes its columns rich and radiant with the productions of, the choicest spirits of the age. The far-famed letters of Junius—the man who lived in mystery,

and shot his arrows of lightning from behind the impenetrable clouds that concealed him from his contemporaries—are productions of marvellous power. They made the hearts of the stoutest statesman quake, and the throne to tremble. Burke said that they made his very “blood run cold ;” and that King, Lords, and Commons, were but the sport of the writer’s fury. How mighty is genius ! This man that lived in a pavilion of obscurest darkness, held, for five long years, the world in terror by his ideas. But those letters of Junius are, I think, equalled by many of the articles that appear in our modern journals. The keen insight, the vast sweep of observation, the varied knowledge, the vigorous expression, the apt and startling allusions, the defiant bearing, the racy, trenchant style, the power of dismantling men and questions of their specious garb, which years ago gave a kind of social omnipotence to the “Public Advertiser,” may be found in some of the newspapers of the present day. I for one feel proud of the intellect which Britain displays in her journals. Oh ! would that it lived and labored in the sunshine of moral truth !

Then the mechanical skill is no less admirable than the intellectual ability. Like the creatures in the Apocalypse, the journal seems to be full of eyes and wings. It observes the most distant and near, the most minute and vast ; and on wings of lightning it carries to its columns intelligence from the remotest parts of the earth. “The great engine,” says Thackeray, “never sleeps. She has her ambassadors in every part of the world—her couriers upon every road.” Each number seems to be a photographic sketch of all classes of society, and of all the events of the hour. It carries the world to a man every morning, and to every man some portion of the world in which he is most interested. It has gossip for the idle, and suggests facts for the men of science. It tells the merchant the pulse of the market. It spreads a banquet of burglaries, suicides, murders, and executions, before the morbid sentimentalist. It shows the statesman how the political winds are blowing,

and gives monarchy to understand how the sovereignty of the people advances.

But whilst we admire its *intellectual* ability and *mechanical* skill, we complain of and lament its moral delinquencies.

In the first place, *many of our journals are positively sceptical and licentious*. In the volume entitled, "The Book and its Story," I find that upwards of twenty-eight millions of infidel and licentious papers issue from the English press every year. (See Appendix *b*.) Some of these are so morally filthy that they are only sold in a clandestine manner. Here is a sum greater in amount than all the bibles, testaments, tracts, religious newspapers and periodicals of every kind put together. Your *high, healthy*, moral periodicals, compared with those of an opposite description, are only as the "Thames" winding about Oxford to the mighty Amazon surging into the bosom of the Atlantic.

But whilst many of them are positively *sceptical and licentious*, there are but *few that are governed by the true standard of morality*—the ethics of common sense justice. Take the leading journal as an example;—and I select this paper, not because it has a greater lack of high and true morality than most of its contemporaries, but because it is the *ruling* paper. Its circulation is not only three times as extensive as all the other "daily papers" put together, but the combined influence of all the rest is *weakness* to it. It is the monarch of journalism. Does this, in many respects, glorious journal *habitually* view questions in the light of moral rectitude—the light in which *man*, as *man*, is bound, by his moral nature and high relations, to view things? Or is it in the light of temporary interest and expediency? Are its teachings of such a nature as to educate the consciences of men into sympathy with truth and honesty?

If the judgment of which some of the highest minds have expressed upon the leading journal be true (see Appendix *c*.) the serious and honest men of this country have a just reason for complaining of the moral unsoundness of their

newspaper press. If you look upon man as a mere material existence, having no moral relations, no interests stretching beyond the brief scene of his mortal life ; if you regard Christianity as a mere fable, and man as a creature of the day ; then you may look at your journalism with unmixed satisfaction and high admiration. But if you cannot so regard man and Christianity, you must feel a profound dissatisfaction with its immoral characteristics and tendencies.

IV. THAT ANY SCHEME ADAPTED TO IMPROVE THE MORAL TONE OF THE JOURNALISM OF THIS COUNTRY, DEMANDS THE SPECIAL ATTENTION OF EVERY MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL. This is an irresistible practical inference, from the foregoing propositions. The desirableness of having a thorough pure, honest, independent newspaper press is deeply felt by thousands of the best men in the land.

But *how* can it be effected ? By the establishment of another censorship (see Appendix *d*), shall we put the press under the control of some ecclesiastical or political functionary ? The blood of such noble men as Bastwick, Prynne, and Leighton, which was shed for its emancipation ; the arguments of Milton for its liberty—arguments which will ring for ever in English literature ; and, thank God ! the genius of modern England ; preclude the possibility of such an attempt. Despots may as well essay to chain up the winds, or to arrest Niagara in its falls, as to manacle the English press. I would not forge one link to fetter the most corrupt press in Europe. “The liberty of the press,” as the old political toast has it ;—“The liberty of the press is the air we breathe. If we have it not, we die.”

How, then, can you improve the journalism of this country ? By creating new journals as private enterprises ? I believe that no amount of capital now would enable any private individual to create an *honest daily* paper that could live long in the presence of the leading journal ; still less that would obtain anything like *authority* in the State.

Give me the famed wealth of a Cræsus, the brains of a Shakspeare, the pen of a Junius, and ask me to create an authoritative daily organ ;—I should expend the whole in a fruitless enterprise.

How, then ? By creating journals that shall be the organs of classes or sects ? There are such journals now, many of them conducted with great ability, and instinct with the true spirit ; but most of them are struggling for existence. All of them have a very limited circulation. After they have spoken to a few hundreds or thousands, at most, of their own sect, their influence dies away ;—the great world knows nothing of them.

How, then ? Suppose the following expedient :—suppose that some twenty thousand honest-hearted, free-minded, and progressive men, from all classes of the community—from all churches, and from no churches ; merchants, lawyers, ministers, statesmen, shopkeepers—banded together by mutual financial interests, and mutual sympathy with a common work. Suppose that work be to create a “daily journal,” not to advocate *religious dogmas*, but to test all events and questions by that golden rule, which meets with a deep response in the conscience of every man :—“Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.” Suppose that the aggregate capital obtained by these twenty thousand be abundantly sufficient to employ more correspondents in every part of the world than any other paper in existence, and to have a literary staff of unequalled intellectual power and genius ;—suppose that this paper, in every respect, is equal, if not superior, to the *best* journal in the land, and that *rectitude* shall characterize its every column (see Appendix e) ;—suppose all this, and you have a most *certain* method of improving our newspaper press. Every man of business will see that a paper started on such conditions could not *possibly* fail. In the first place you have capital sufficient for every purpose, and you have also, in the combination, a sufficient number of advertisers and readers to support the paper. Each of the twenty

thousand, if he sees a paper at all, would see this, for two reason :—(1.) Because it is supposed to promote his principles. (2.) Because, by supporting it, he is increasing his per centage on his own investment. It is his paper. And, in the second place, the fact that it started from these twenty thousand men would give it a prestige and a power which would carry it into all circles of society, and cause it to be regarded here, as well as in other parts of Europe and America, as emphatically the national organ. Statesmen and merchants may ignore your little denominational papers but they could not ignore a paper representing such a combination of men ;—nay, they would feel bound to see such a paper, to form a correct judgment of the feeling of the country. They would regard it as the best pulse by which to test the nation's health—the Dial to point out the hour reached in the true moral, as well as material, civilization of the world.

Such a scheme as this is *actually* in existence, and progressing most *successfully*. Many hundreds have already joined it, comprising some of the leading *merchants, manufacturers, lawyers, ministers*, in the kingdom. The question of morally improving the journalism of the day I regard as having a special claim upon the attention of ministers of religion. Their educational attainments, their high-toned ethics, their soul elevating work, specially qualify, and therefore specially bind them to take the lead in this glorious enterprise. The minister who says the work is too secular for him has mistaken his mission. Instead of endeavouring to improve and guide the mind of an active age, he should retire into the cell of a monk, and luxuriate in pietistic sentiments and sighs. If the Church is to make head—if the pulpit is not to become *effete*—a daily press must be created that shall recognise the ethics and ordinances of Christianity, and that shall *command* the attention of the reading world :—and who should be so active in such a work as ministers?

Earnestly, therefore, do I commend the National News-

paper League to the especial attention of my ministerial readers. Thoughtful men will readily concede that no institution could become a more effective agent in widely diffusing right principles through the world, and keen-sighted, practical men will see that the project is admirably feasible in every point. The men whose mission it is to multiply difficulties, and who "sow not by reason of the cold"—to whom the "grasshopper" is a burden—will, of course, stand aloof, in fear, from such a movement as this (see objections met, Appendix *f*); but the strong, practical, men have joined it in hundreds, and are doing so every day. This institution affords an opportunity to every man to help on the cause of truth, in the most effective way, without any sacrifice to himself. The small sum he subscribes is not given away—is not lost; it remains his, to increase in value. It gives him, too, his due share of power in the management of the whole. He can, in one word, through this institution, both serve his country and his race; and his own secular interests and honor too.

Brethren, if the propositions laid down in this homily be true—if it be true that nothing that exercises an influence upon the moral character of mankind should be looked upon with indifference by ministers of the Gospel; if, of all the agents at work in modern society, there is nothing more influential in the formation of the moral character than the newspaper press; if modern journalism, as now exercised, which is so influential in the formation of character, is morally deleterious—then ought you not at once to hail any adapted plan to make the daily press an instrument of moral good? I urge you, therefore, to help on this magnificent movement. Now is the time! Many a miserable Chesterfield will come in when the work is done, and deal out his fulsome eulogies on those who have borne the burden and the heat of the day. There is a time when the most humble service has a priceless value; and there is a time when the most costly is contemptible.

I attach immense importance to this movement. As a

minister of the Gospel, I would not depreciate the pulpit ; but I regard the creation of a journal like the one proposed as of more importance just now than building churches and chapels. There is not, I am told, a daily paper in London, unless it be the "Morning Star," that will stand up for the English Sabbath. Let the Sabbath go, and your churches and chapels will soon follow.

Such a journal as the one proposed will speak to tens of thousands every day ;—speak to those who never enter a place of worship ;—speak in the counting-houses of merchants, in the mansions of statesmen, and palaces of royalty. Such a journal, instead of sneering at religious institutions, and endeavouring to weaken their influence on the popular mind, would seek to purify and invigorate them, and become a forerunner and helpmate to every intelligent, devoted, and honest minister of Christ. Such a journal would be above bribes and intimidation, and do its daily work under the broad sun of rectitude, regardless of the smiles or frowns of men. Such a journal would supply nourishment, inspiration, and courage to all the lesser journals in the country, which struggle for the right, and help on a righteous cause, however low its condition or obscure its advocates. Such a journal would preach liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound, and be everywhere the terror of tyrants, but the friend of the free. Such a journal would take up, employ, and circulate, the enlightening, renovating thoughts of the most *honest men, profoundest thinkers, and healthiest patriots*. Such a journal would be an enemy to despotism, at home and abroad ; an asylum for "oppressed nationalities ;" a co-worker with all who endeavor to en-throne truth and righteousness in the land ; a *school for ignorant statesmen* ; a rallying-point for the true and progressive of all sections in the state. Such a journal would be a Christian reformer. It would not cast out devils by devils, but expel the bad by the infusion of the good. It would help the nations to throw off corrupt and oppressive institutions,

as nature helps the forest to throw off its withered foliage—by the inbreathing of a new life. Such a journal, to use the language of Emerson, “would feed its batteries from the central heart of humanity, be the natural leader of British reform, the defender of the exile and the patriot, and give to England a new millennium of beneficent power.”

APPENDIX.

[a.]—From Knight Hunt’s “Fourth Estate,” the Edinburgh and Westminster Reviews of 1855, we gather the following facts as to the rise and growth of journalism in this country:—

“In the year 1622, a man wearing the unpolite name of Nathaniel Butter started the first newspaper in England, and it was called the ‘Weekly Newes.’ This ‘Weekly Newes,’ though it only lived about eighteen years, was the great progenitor of that race of broad-sheets that *now* fly every morning to our homes as ‘doves to the windows.’ The last number made its appearance on the 9th of January, 1640,—a memorable year, in which the Short Parliament, dismissed by King Charles ‘in a huff,’ after a session of three weeks, was succeeded by the ‘Long Parliament,’ which, *unluckily*, Charles could not manage quite so easily.”

When we remember that Caxton had established his printing press at Westminster a hundred and fifty years before the birth of the first paper; and when we remember that a class of men called “news-writers,” whose work it was to despatch, in *manuscript*, the news of the day to those who could *pay* for such a luxury, had been for years before in regular operation, and that this Nathaniel Butter, the projector of this “Weekly News,” was one of the craft, we cannot yield him much praise, either for the *inventiveness* of his faculties, or the enterprise of his spirit. News-writers had been common for years before. He had been a news-writer. He passed from a news-writer to a news-printer, and this was the sum of his inventions. The only wonder is, that, with *great* events sweeping, in terrible succession, over the public mind, and with a growing *thirst* for the news of the day, Caxton’s press should have remained, for a hundred and fifty years, unworked by a newspaper.

During the existence of the “Weekly News,” and down to a much later period, the political warfare of the press was carried on chiefly

by means of pamphlets,—of which, not less than thirty thousand were issued in the space of twenty years. During the contest between Charles I. and his Parliament, however, Peter Haylin established a weekly journal to advocate the royal cause; and Matthew Needham, whom D'Israeli called the great patriarch of newspaper writers, followed the example, and started "The Mercurius Britannicus" in the parliamentary interest; "The Mercurius Pragmaticus" on the other side; then again, "The Mercurius Politicus" on behalf of the popular party. In 1663, Roger L'Estrange set on foot the "Public Intelligencer," which was soon merged in the "London Gazette," a publication entirely under Government control. In 1669, he also started another paper, called the "Observer," which was chiefly distinguished for its virulent and malignant Toryism.* As the revolutionary elements increased in energy, and the English mind grew more earnest and active in thought about the *right*, the *true*, and the *best*, newspapers sprang up in abundance. In the course of a few years some of the enterprising proprietors began to publish twice, and even thrice, a week. It is stated that, at one period of the reign of Charles the Second, the number of newspapers increased to seventy. Most of them, however, seem to have had but an ephemeral existence.

It was upwards of three-quarters of a century after the first weekly paper appeared that a daily journal was started. The first daily paper which started—according to Hunt, in 1709; but according to a writer in the Westminster Review (October, 1855), in 1702—was called the "Daily Courant." It consisted of only one page of paper, printed on one side. The whole of its contents would scarcely fill one column of our present daily journals. It anticipated Mr. Cobden's idea of what a newspaper ought to be; for it merely contained facts, and studiously by purpose and pledge, avoided all "impertinent remarks" in the shape of editorial note or comment.

With the exception of the "Daily News" and the penny papers recently introduced, the whole of the morning newspapers now existing date from the latter half of the last century. "The Morning Chronicle" was founded as a Whig organ in 1769. "The Morning Post" dates from 1772. Coleridge and Lamb graced its pages with their productions. "The Morning Herald" began its career in 1780. A clergyman, by the name of Bates, was its founder. He seems to have been a man of strong pugilistic impulses, and proved its membership of the *militant* church by fighting no less than three duels. "The Times,"—the king of kings in the realm of journalism—appeared first on the 1st of January, 1788, a year before the commencement of the French Revolution. It was a continuation of a paper called the "Daily Universal Register." For the first twelve or four-

* See *Edinburgh Review*, 1855, p. 471.

teen years of its existence, it did not seem to attract any great measure of public attention. It was the late Mr. Walter, son of the founder, and father of the present member for Nottingham, that laid the broad foundation of its future prosperity.

A summary of the British Newspaper Press, arranged according to locality and to political bias, at the end of the year 1849, offers the following results:—"In London, 113 papers; in England, 223; in Wales, 11; in Scotland, 85; in Ireland, 101; in the British Islands, 14. General summary:—Liberal papers, 218; Conservative, 174; Neutral, 155. The total number of journals, of all shades of opinion, being 547.*"

In 1833—5, the three London papers having the highest circulation were "The Times," "Herald," and "Morning Chronicle." The number of stamps issued to these three journals being as follows:—

	Times.	Morning Herald.	Chronicle.
1833 . . .	3,671,491	2,602,000	1,568,392
1835 . . .	2,744,494	2,249,000	1,958,500

In 1838, we find that the "Morning Chronicle" gets, in circulation, nearly up to the "Times." But now we find that the "Times" has nine times the circulation of the "Morning Advertiser," eleven times the circulation of the "Daily News," and twenty times that of the "Morning Herald," "Morning Post," "Morning Chronicle," "Globe," "Sun,"—and forty times that of the "Standard." In fact, the "Times" has nearly three times the circulation of the whole of the daily press, excepting, of course, the penny papers; so that we may say that the "Times" is *the daily press* of this country. It has got nearly the whole in its hand.†

[b.]—"There are about sixty cheap periodicals issued every week, of a positively pernicious tendency. Some of them issue 100,000 a week, some 80,000, some 20,000; having in the whole a yearly sale of six millions two hundred and forty thousand.

"There are, besides these, infidel and polluting publications which make lovers of the Bible wonder where their readers can be found, but which nevertheless have a yearly circulation of ten million four hundred thousand!

"And there are yet others so intensely wicked, that the rest denounce them as wicked, and which can only be sold by stealth, whose issues this writer specifies as five hundred and twenty thousand annually!

"He sums up his totals thus:—

* Hunt, 189.

† *Westminster Review*, Oct. 1855, p. 516.

Ten Stamped Papers	11,702,000	per year.
Six Unstamped Papers	6,240,000	„
Sixty pernicious Periodicals	10,400,000	„
Worst class—those that are sceptic; (denounced, and only sold by stealth)	520,000	„
Total	28,862,000	„

And this only in our own Christian country. Week after week, year after year, does this tide of evil roll on: and what does the Church of God do to meet it? Adding together the annual issues of Bibles, Testaments, religious tracts, newspapers, and periodicals of every kind, we find a total of 24,418,620, leaving a balance on the side of the evil of, alas! four millions four hundred and forty-three thousand three hundred and eighty.*

“It may still be less generally known, that free-thinkers, as they call themselves, have now instituted a conference meeting for examining the progress of their various societies, in different parts of the kingdom. They, too, have perceived that “union is strength”; and from Bolton, Blackburn, Glasgow, Bradford, Manchester, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Nottingham, Paisley, Preston, Stafford, and Sheffield, they, too, have their reports of each other’s proceedings. This is a new feature of the times; and, sad to say, the paper which makes known their results, and gives union and emphasis to their efforts against the Bible, is conducted with calm determination, not with low abuse, by a man who was once a scholar in the Sunday school.

“There are annually issued—

Of infidel publications	12,200,200
Of atheistic ditto	624,000
Of popish ditto	520,000
Making a total of	13,344,200

All these have *their* active distributors: they are met with in the railway-carriage and on the steam-boat, scattering industriously and gratuitously those seeds of evil with confident expectation, that, when those are well sown, England will be revolutionised.”—*The Book and its Story*, pp. 369, 370, 371.

[c.]—Some thirty-two years ago, Hazlitt wrote what he considered its character in the following terms:—

“It is a commercial paper, and it is conducted on the principles of trade and business. It floats with the tide; it sails with the stream. It has no other principle, as we take it. It is not ministerial; not patriotic. It is *civic*. It is the lungs of the British Metropolis; the

* See “Church in Earnest,” pp. 94, 97.

mouthpiece, echo, and oracle, of the Stock Exchange—the representation of the mercantile interests. The “Times” conforms to the changes of the times. It bears down upon a question like a first-rate man-of-war, with streamers flying, and all hands on deck; but if the broadside does not answer, turns short upon it like a galley, firing off a few petty squibs to cover its retreat. It takes up no falling cause, fights no up-hill battles, advocates no great principle, holds out a helping-hand to no oppressed or obscure individual. It is ever strong on the strong side. Its style is magniloquent. Its spirit is not magnanimous. It is valiant, swaggering, insolent, with a hundred thousand readers at its heels; but the instant the rascal rout turns round, with the whiff and wind of some fell circumstance, the “Times”—the renegade, inconstant “Times”—turns with them. Let the mob shout, the City roar, and the voice of the renegade “Times” is heard above all, with outrageous deafening clamour; but let the vulgar hubbub cease, and no whisper nor echo of it is ever after heard in the “Times.” Like Bottom in the play, it then aggravates its voice, so as if it were a singing-dove or a nightingale.”

It is remarkable that this, which was written thirty-two years ago, agrees exactly with the judgment which Emerson, the great Transatlantic sage, has just pronounced upon it in his “English Traits.” He says:—

“Was ever such arrogance as the tone of this paper? Every slip of an Oxonian or Cambridgian, who writes his first leader, assumes that we subdued the earth before we sat down to write this particular ‘Times.’

One would think the world was on its knees to the ‘Times’ office for its daily breakfast. But the arrogance is calculated. Who would care for it if it ‘surmised,’ or dare to ‘confess,’ or ventured to ‘predict,’ &c. No; *it is so*, and so it shall be.

“The morality and patriotism of the ‘Times’ claims to be representative, and by no means ideal. It gives the argument not of the majority, but of the commanding class. Its editors know better than to defend Russia or Austria, or English vested rights, on abstract grounds; but they give a voice to the class who at the moment take the lead, and they have an instinct for finding where the power now lies, which is eternally shifting its banks. Sympathizing with, and speaking for, the class that rules the hour, yet being apprised of every ground swell, every Chartist resolution, every Church squabble, every strike in the mills, they detect the first trembling of the change. They watch the hard and bitter struggles of the authors of each liberal movement year by year,—watching them only to taunt and obstruct them; until at last, when they see that these have established their facts—that power is on the point of passing to them—they strike in

with the voice of a monarch, astonish those whom they succour as much as those whom they desert, and make victory sure."

[d.]—The censorship of the press was established in Europe soon after the discovery of the art of printing by Gutenberg. The Church of Rome, the sworn enemy to *liberty of thought*, as well as to liberty in every form, was supreme when printing was invented, and assumed at once the same power of censorship over printed books which it had previously exercised over written ones. In 1514, it was formally decreed that no publication whatever should be issued in any place where the Church of Rome had jurisdiction, unless such printed works had first obtained the written sanction of the bishop, or of the inquisitor of the diocese. The authority thus set up was exercised in all countries where the Pope had influence; and, amongst the rest, became part of the law of England. The more far-seeing of the clergy at once understood the importance of controlling the new instrument for the multiplication of printed books. It is stated that Wolsey exclaimed, We must destroy the press or the press will destroy us. True, Wolsey; a free, enlightened, independent press, will ever destroy men of thy class. It is an enemy to craft in all its hideous forms—kingcraft and priestcraft too!

One might have hoped that after the Reformation—after England had wrenched herself from the grasp of the Pope—the censorship of the press would have been abolished at once. But no! The Protestant king and the Protestant bishop took that right of censorship which before was exercised by Rome;—and, even more, the Crown of England put another fetter on the press. It prohibited all printing without license, and limited licenses to favorites. Elizabeth issued a proclamation that no pamphlet or treatise should be put to press but such as should be first seen and allowed. And further, lest that were not sufficient, she ordained that no printing should be used anywhere but in London, Oxford, and Cambridge. Her two successors, James I. and Charles I., held this power with unrelaxing tenacity, and exercised it, like her, with a rod of iron. Reformation by acts of parliament, and by parchment, cannot destroy the spirit of Popery. I see Popery as rampant in Laud as in Bonner; in the "Star Chamber" as in the Inquisition.

Notwithstanding these restrictions, people would print. The mind of England which had been slumbering for ages, was waking up, felt intellectually hungry, and cried for food. If physical hunger will break through stone walls, intellectual hunger will break through acts of parliament and royal proclamations. It did so during the whole period of the censorship. Though Leighton was whipped, pilloried, had his cheek branded, his nose slit, and sentenced to be

shut up in the Fleet for life, and to pay ten thousand pounds;—though Lilburn received five hundred lashes for pamphlets surreptitiously published in Holland;—though Burton, Bastwick, and Prynne, were fined five thousand pounds a man, set in the pillory, branded in the cheek, and condemned to the loss of their ears, and to perpetual imprisonment;—and though Samuel Johnson (not the Doctor) was flogged at the cart's tail from Newgate to Tyburn;—though such an execrable and cruel despotism followed the free utterance of thought with such infernal torture as this, and much more;—*men would still think. Thought would express itself, and men would print.* Authors wrote on, preparing the work for the press, as they saw the blood of their brother authors stream by. Once unseal the well of thought in a nation, and, supplied by the eternal ocean of intelligence, it will flow on, accumulating in force and quantity, for ever. In the reign of Charles the First, free opinion in England became too strong to be suppressed either by king or bishop. The Revolution, that swept like a wild and resistless whirlwind over our country, broke the fetters with which censorship and license had shackled the press, and laid the foundation of that perfect liberty which it now enjoys.

[e.]—We understand that the Directors of the “NATIONAL NEWSPAPER LEAGUE COMPANY” (LIMITED), have provided in the deed of settlement that one column of their paper, to be called “THE DIAL,” shall be devoted to the ethics of the questions and events of the day. This column will be in the hands of men not only of high intellect and attainment, but of *Christian conscience*, who will look at all questions in the light of Christian ethics,—which are the ethics of unsophisticated conscience. By this arrangement, every issue of the paper must always have a high moral tone.

[f.] Three objections have been urged against the scheme. First: That it would be impossible to get twenty thousand to take shares. Now, when it is known that not a single town has been visited that has not returned its full proportion of the number required—in some cases they have returned three times the proportion, and in some cases twice—this objection is sufficiently answered. Indeed, its propounders have given it up now. The second objection that we have heard is, that there is no security given for the carrying out of the principles laid down in the prospectus, and upon which shares are taken. This is simply false. The strongest security is given. The principles are engrossed in the deed of settlement, and no editor or board dare transgress them. The editor, for the time being, must of course, be free. The only powers to sway him are your principles, and they

must rule. The other objection we have heard is this:—That the principle of “religious equality” laid down in the prospectus, cannot be carried out if Churchmen join the undertaking. Two facts will show the groundlessness of this objection. First: That there is a large and rapidly-growing number of Churchmen in the country who thoroughly adopt the principle of religious equality;—not in the sense of endowing all, but in the sense of endowing none;—the sense in which the promoters of the enterprise hold it. Secondly: None but Churchmen of that class will join it; and therefore there will be perfect agreement on that point. But answering objections is not to our taste; for objection-makers are seldom convinced of the practicability of an undertaking until the work is accomplished. This class have never yet helped on a great movement.

The Genius of the Gospel.

ABLE expositions of the Gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its *widest* truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

TWENTY-NINTH SECTION.—*Matt. x. 42.*

The Issues and Encouragements of an Evangelical Mission.

As it is always our endeavor to elicit the *general* truths of a passage, we frequently find it inconvenient to follow the exact order of the words;—that is, to expound verse by verse *seriatim*. This, in many cases, would lead to much tautology, and confusion of thought. The wisest, and, we think, the fairest method oftentimes is to enquire what are the *general truths* contained in the whole paragraph or chapter. This, as will be seen, is the plan we most frequently adopt, and

the plan on which we feel necessary to proceed in relation to this chapter, containing the "commission of Christ." We find in this chapter, three classes of general truths—those referring to *the laws of an evangelical mission*, those referring to *the issues of an evangelical mission*, and those referring to *the encouragement of an evangelical mission*. We discussed the first in our last article, and we proceed now to the other two.

II. THE ISSUES OF AN EVANGELICAL MISSION. What are the results on human souls which the proper working out of an evangelical mission will produce? In other words, What moral effects on the souls of men will arise from the promotion of Christianity in the world? The chapter under review enables us to answer that the effects are threefold :—*spiritual peace to the receiver, augmented guilt to the rejecter, and great trials to the promoter.*

First : *Spiritual peace to the receiver.* "And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it." (11—13.) In our last article we have remarked upon these verses, so far as they related to the behaviour of the evangelist. The point to be noticed now is, that they were, as the messengers of Christ, the communicators of *peace* to those who properly received their message. "Peace be to this house" or family. These words were not to be used as the empty phrase of etiquette and conventional greeting, but as the spirit and burden of their mission; as the expression of the profoundest desire of their souls, and the highest end of their office as the apostles of Christ.

The apostles, then, in their salutation, expressed the grand object of Christianity, which is to give "peace." Its language to every family and soul it addresses is, "Peace be unto you." Its author is the "Prince of Peace." The celestial song that announced His nativity proclaimed "peace

on earth ;” the last legacy He left the world was peace. His word is the “gospel of peace ;” His empire is “peace in the Holy Ghost.” To all who yield to His benign teachings and gracious influences, He imparts a “peace that passeth all understanding.” What is this peace? Though it can only be fully appreciated by experience, it may be—it often is—misunderstood. What is it? It stands opposed to four things :—(1.) *To the moral quiescence of the thoughtless.* There are souls whose consciences are in a torpid state. Their passions work, and their intellectual powers play, but their moral sense—the heart of their being—is dormant. Its eyes are closed : it sees not the sad portents that everywhere cloud their moral heavens. Its ears are sealed, and deaf to those distant moanings in the atmosphere, which are prophetic of awful tempests. This is not peace ; it is the sleep of the lion, which invigorates impulses that shall wake into augmented fury. It is that unhealthy quiet of nature which forges thunderbolts and collects fuel for the lightning. True peace is the peace of a quickened, active conscience, that has done battle with lusts and evil habits, won the victory, and obtained the throne of the soul ; ruling all by the harmonious will of God. True peace stands opposed (2.) *to all anxieties of soul.* Men are harassed by four kinds of anxiety—*speculative, secular, social, and spiritual.* There are anxieties arising from our utter incompetency to solve many of the problems which the Bible, history, and experience, press heavily on our hearts. There are anxieties arising from the circumstances of ourselves and families in relation to corporeal wants ; there are anxieties arising from the injustice of society, the faithlessness of professed friends, the bereavements of death ; and there are anxieties arising from a sense of guilt, and a desire for salvation. True peace is opposed to all these anxieties. It expels all anxious thoughts. The intellect trusts to the wisdom and goodness of God for a solution of all perplexing problems ; the heart confides in the paternal providence of God for all necessary temporal good ; the spirit is divinely guided to form those friendships

which, when dissolved on earth, will be renewed in heaven ; and the soul trusts implicitly to the merits and mercy of Christ for complete salvation. He that believeth entereth into a rest from all these harassing anxieties. True peace stands opposed (3.) to *all religious inactivity*. Inaction and true peace are opposite states. Peace of soul, like the peace of planets, consists in harmonious action. The "God of peace" is ever at work. "He fainteth not, neither is weary." The moral rest of God is right action. The "Prince of Peace" went about doing good. True peace of soul is not the peace of a stagnant lake, but the peace of a flowing river, too deep to be rippled, too strong to be resisted.

To give the world this peace is the grand aim of Christianity, and this is one of the results of its operations.

Another result of an evangelical mission is—

Secondly : *Augmented guilt to the rejecter*. "Let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city." (13—15.) These words suggest two ideas touching the augmented guilt of the rejecter :—(1.) *That his guilt is no injury to the minister who has offered him the blessing*. His peace shall "return" to him. The stream of pacific sentiment and desire which he sent forth from the depths of his heart, when it finds no resting-place, shall flow back, in all its plenitude, into his own soul. The idea, perhaps, is, that the attempt to do good, even if it fail in its object, is nevertheless no injury to the agent. The honest effort of usefulness, reacting upon the agent, comes back to his own soul with interest. The attempt to do good is good to him who makes the effort, even though the object be injured by it. Notwithstanding this, ministers are not to waste their time and energy upon the incorrigible. "Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake

off the dust of your feet." The Hebrews were accustomed to express truths by dramatic actions. Isaiah walked three years naked and barefoot, to express the utter destitution and shame that would befall the Egyptian and Ethiopian captives. (Isa. xx. 2—4.) Elijah, for many days, ate his bread by weight, and drank his water by measure, to intimate the terrible famine that was about to visit the land. Jesus took up a little child, and placed him in the midst of the assembly, to express the importance of meekness and simplicity of character. The Bible, in fact, abounds with such specimens of dramatic teaching. In accordance with this custom, the apostles are commanded to perform a dramatic act towards those who neglected their celestial overtures, in order to express their horror at the guilt of their conduct. Another idea which the verses under review suggest in relation to the guilt of the rejecter, is—(2.) *That his guilt will be fully manifest at the judgment day.* "Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable," &c. This verse contains four solemn truths. First: *That there is a period of retribution to dawn on our race.* It is here called "the day of judgment." The state of the world requires such a day ;—oppressed virtue cries out for such a day ;—the Bible distinctly declares that there will come such a day. Every day of our life has some gleams of retribution that prophesy and mirror something of such a day. Secondly: *That men of remotest ages will be concerned in the transactions of that day.* The men of Sodom and Gomorrha, as well as the men of our Saviour's age, will be there. Two thousand years had passed away since Sodom and Gomorrha were destroyed ; but Jesus teaches here that they are not gone out of existence : they shall appear again on the day of judgment. All will appear then. Thirdly: *That amongst the myriads who will appear on this day, there will be an immense variety in the degree of guilt.* "More tolerable," &c. Every land, and age, and individual, will have their peculiarities of guilt. Some of the sinners will appear almost innocent in comparison with others. Fourthly: *That diversity of guilt will*

in a great degree, arise from the amount of religious opportunity abused. Sodom and Gomorrha will appear guilty. They had nature in her most suggestive and poetic forms ; they had Lot to preach to them. But their guilt will appear as nothing to the guilt of those who had the teachings of Christ and His apostles.

The Gospel, then, augments the guilt of the rejecter, as well as imparts true peace to its receivers. It is the "savor of death unto death," as well as of life unto life. But it produces life by design and adaptation, death only by contingency. It is the moral *cause* of life ; it is only the *occasion* of death.

The other result is—

Thirdly : *Great trials to the promoter.* Christ here states the great trials which His apostles would meet with in their endeavor to promote His doctrines. These trials would arise :—(1.) *From the spirit of the world in relation to His system.* The spirit of the Jews, in reference to Him, was like that of a *wolf* (ver. 16)—selfish and savage. As this ravenous beast prowls about in search of its prey, the Jewish people pursued the Lamb of God. From this spirit, Christ tells His disciples, great trials would come to them. They would be delivered up to "the council ;" they would be "scourged in their synagogues ;" they would be "brought before governors ;" they would be "hated of all men" for His "name's sake." This savage spirit would thus express itself. Mankind, in their depraved state, have always more or less of this spirit in relation to the Gospel ; and from it has always arisen to the disciples of Christ persecution in some form or other. The other cause, which is here suggested as producing trials to the evangelist, is (2.) *the influence of His system in producing social divisions.* "The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child : and the children shall rise up against their parents," &c. "Think not that I come to send peace on the earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword." "I am come to set a man at variance with his father," &c. Three considerations will perhaps explain this language,—which sounds somewhat strange on the lips of the Prince of

Peace :—(1.) That, as a matter of fact, His doctrines do create divisions amongst men, even where there is the closest physical relationship. In the same family the receiver and the rejecter separate most widely in soul—pass off into opposite moral directions of thought, sympathy, and purpose. The cause of this is not in Christianity, but in the depravity of the rejecter. Christianity is simply the occasion of its development. Nutritious food may be hurtful to a diseased stomach, light may be most injurious to a diseased eye, music most distressing to a diseased brain; and so Christianity, which is designed and fitted to produce peace, will always produce the opposite in the heart of the rejecter. (2.) The feelings which these divisions create are generally, on the part of the rejecter, most malignant. Matthew Henry justly says :—“The most violent feuds have ever been those that have arisen from difference in religion. No enmity like that of the persecutors; no resolution like that of the persecuted.” The struggle is always fierce and invincible. (3.) As the result of all this, the promoters of Christianity are to expect opposition, and even persecution. “I am come not to send peace, but a sword.” As if the Divine Reformer had said, Do not expect that, because my doctrines are essentially pacific, and because my grand aim is peace, and your mission is peace, that you will meet with no opposition. Awful and bloody wars will frequently, though always *incidentally*, come out of your pacific mission. The moral atmosphere of the world is so charged with impurities, that bitter storms must come before men can have the salubrious and sunny influence of celestial peace.

Now, the fact that Christ warned his disciples of all this opposition, shows four things :—(1.) *His thorough honesty*. He wished them thoroughly to understand the difficulties of their work before starting. He was no deceiver. (2.) *His knowledge of human nature*. He knew exactly what influence His system would have upon the heart of the world, and what moral tempests it would evolve from the soul of depravity. (3.) *The strength of the disciples*. The fact that

they went forth at all with such terrible prospects shows the strength of their faith. (4.) *The necessity for encouragements.*

This leads us to the third and last general division of our subject :—

III. THE ENCOURAGEMENTS OF AN EVANGELICAL MISSION. Christ here supplies them with an unsparing hand. Let us briefly elicit them.

First : *The cause for which the true evangelist suffers is most honorable.* Jesus says that they are “for my name’s sake.” (Ver. 22.) We might well ask, What was there in the *name* of Christ to excite malignant feelings against His friends? There are infamous names in history suited to awaken the profoundest contempt and the most indignant ire of humanity. But Christ’s name stands for all that is amiable in spirit, immaculate in character, sublime in purpose, God-like in beneficence and majesty. To suffer for the sake of mere worldly heroes might be a disgrace ; but to suffer for Christ’s sake is the greatest honor for man this side of heaven. The apostles, and confessors, and martyrs, felt this, amid their severest tortures. They thanked God that they were “counted worthy.” To suffer for Christ is to suffer for the promotion of truth, rectitude, benevolence, and happiness, amongst men.

Secondly : *The example which the true evangelist has in His suffering is most glorious.* “The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub,* how much more shall they call them of his household?” (Verses 24, 25.) “The various etymologies of Beelzebub, or Beelzebul,”

* Beelzebub—German, Fliegen—*Baal* (2 Kings i. 2), was an Ekronitish deity; so called because a power was ascribed to him of removing troublesome flies. Zeus—“Jupiter”—had the cognomen or epithet, ἀπομνιος, “the driver away of flies;” ἡνιαγξος, “fly-catcher.”—*Olshausen.*

says Stier, "about which contention is raised, do not affect the subject; for this is certain, at least, that it was a name of the chief of the devils, and a particularly scornful one, used by such as would not do him the honor of his more dignified name, 'Satan'—the *διαβολος*." By giving this name to Christ, therefore, His enemies expressed the most malignant contempt. Here, then, is the example of the true evangelist—His sufferings. But how does the fact that Christ suffered in His public ministry give an encouragement to all evangelists under their sufferings? (1.) Because if the Master suffered in His work, these sufferings are no proofs, in themselves, that they are disqualified for their mission. (2.) Because if their Master suffered in His work, these sufferings were not necessarily connected with any disgrace. There are ignominious sufferings. (3.) Because if their Master suffered in His work, their sufferings were no necessary indications of Divine displeasure. (4.) Because if their Master suffered in His work, there would be hope that their sufferings would issue in the same glorious results. They would hope to overcome as He overcame.

Thirdly: *The success of the cause for which the true evangelist suffers is most certain.* "There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops." (Verses 26, 27.) The idea here is, that the doctrines which were comparatively concealed, shut up in the breasts of some twelve men, should one day become fully and universally known. He assures them (1.) that they *would* spread. "What I tell you in darkness" *shall* be known," &c. We are engaged in no doubtful enterprise: the little "cloud" shall cover the heavens, the little "stone" shall grow into a mountain, the "mustard seed" shall become a majestic tree. Those doctrines, which Jesus quietly whispered in the ear of twelve poor men, shall one day roll in streams of rapturous music through the world. He assures them (2.) that they *ought* to spread. He not only predicts that they shall, but

commands His disciples to set in earnest to the work. "Preach ye upon the housetops." Jesus had not one doctrine for the initiated, and another for the commonalty. His truths were for the race, and race-wide should be the proclamation. Here, then, is encouragement. "Therefore be ye steadfast, unmoveable," &c.

Fourthly : *The providential care of God over the true evangelist in suffering is positively guaranteed.* "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing ? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Verses 29—31.) The argument in these verses may be thrown into three propositions, which they either imply or express :—(1.) That in the estimation of the great God, some of His creatures are more valuable than others. Men are more valuable than birds. "Ye are of more value than many sparrows." (2.) That over those of His creatures which are the lowest in the scale of value, He exercises a benevolent providence. Not one of the sparrows "falls on the ground without your Father." Over all life, even plantal life, He exercises care. "The lilies of the field," &c. (3.) That the fact that He exercises a benevolent providence over the *least* valuable, is an assurance that He does so over the *most* valuable. If He takes care of the lesser, He will surely take care of the greater. Hence "the very hairs" of His children's heads "are all numbered." Here, then, is encouragement to the true evangelist under suffering. He may say, with Job, "He knoweth the way I take," &c.

Fifthly : *The reward of the true evangelist for all sufferings will be most glorious at last.* "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." (Verses 32, 33.) These words contain three ideas :—(1.) The function of true discipleship. To "confess" Christ ;—to confess Him as the Messiah—the redeeming

God. To confess not merely with the lip, but practically with the life ; not in solitude, but “before men” on the open theatre of life ; not merely in the temple, but in the market, the senate, at the bar—everywhere. (2.) The temptation of true discipleship. There is a temptation to be “ashamed” of Him, and to “deny” Him. This arises from two causes—the natural tendency of the individual to bow to the opinions of the multitude, and the fact that the opinions of the multitude are generally against Christ. Herein is the temptation. In heaven, where all love Christ, there is no such temptation. The influence flows in the other direction. (3.) The reward of true discipleship. “Him will I confess also before my father which is in heaven.” I will acknowledge him before the Eternal and His assembled universe, as my devoted disciple, my faithful servant, my beloved friend. What a reward is this !

Another encouragement is—

Sixthly : *That if actuated by the right spirit, the true evangelist will find the greatest trials the greatest blessings.* “He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it : and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.” Three ideas are contained in these remarkable words :—(1.) That self-denial is a necessary condition of Christian discipleship. The “cross” is the most powerfully expressive symbol of self-denial ; and this cross, says Christ, must be borne, painful though it is, ignominious though it may seem. (2.) That this self-denial may involve the sacrifice of our present animal well-being. “He that loseth his life ;”—*i.e.*, not *existence*, but animal happiness or well-being. By following Christ, a man may lose—men often have lost—all their physical pleasures and comforts :—their support, liberty, energy, health, and even animal life itself. This Christ’s own self-denial led to ; and this self-denial has led to in the case of martyrs. (3.) That the self-denial which leads even to the sacrifice of animal well-being, is the greatest blessing, if inspired by due respect for Christ. “He that findeth his

life shall lose it : and he that loseth his life FOR MY SAKE shall find it." Olshausen thus paraphrases the words :—"He that findeth his (fleshly) life shall lose it (that is, the spiritual life) : and he that loses his life (the fleshly one) shall find it (the spiritual one)." There is a *selfish* self-denial which may lead a man to sacrifice his animal well-being, and have nothing in return ;—lose all. There is a self-denial for the sake of friends. Christ does not say, You shall find your highest life in this. There is a self-denial for the sake of obtaining heaven. Heathens will sacrifice their lives for this, and many selfish professors of Christianity sacrifice much for this. Christ does not promise that such persons shall find their highest life. The men who seek their happiness as an end will assuredly lose it. Self-seeking is self-ruin. This doctrine is true to the laws of mind, the experience of mankind, as well as the teachings of Christ. What, then, is the self-denial that ends in man's highest well-being ? "FOR MY SAKE." Which is the same as to say, For the sake of eternal rectitude—universal benevolence ; for the sake of the well-being of others, and the honor of God. He who acts from this inspiration, whatever sacrifices he makes here, shall gain the highest life and happiness by it. What encouragement is this !

Another encouragement is—

Seventhly : *That the interests of the true evangelist are thoroughly identified with the interests of Christ.* (Verses 40—42.) He assures them of three things :—(1.) That He would receive those who would receive them, as if they received Himself. "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me." I shall regard the treatment that you meet with, kind or otherwise, as if it were offered to me. I go with you ;—blend my sensibilities and interests with yours. Those that persecute you persecute me. (2.) He assures them that those that would receive them as *His true* servants, should meet with their reward. "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet," &c. He who receives them merely as

men, or in some other capacity, will not have the reward. He who receives under his roof a truly good man, gets a blessing in many ways. His ideas, his spirit, his example, his prayers, are all blessings. He assures them (3.) that even those who render the humblest service to the humblest of their number shall be rewarded. A "cup of cold water" to one of the "little ones" will secure a blessing.

We have thus rapidly reviewed Christ's commission—a portion of Divine revelation which the Christian church, in its evangelical efforts, has practically set at nought. Space has forced us to be most condensed in our expository thoughts. There are germs for volumes here worthy the study of every man; there are elements for a legislation here which should regulate every church in its endeavours to evangelize the world.

Germs of Thought.

SUBJECT :—*The Tears of Deity over the impenitence of Man.*

"And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it."—Luke xix. 41.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Twentieth.

I REGARD the text not merely as expressing the tenderness and sympathy of *the Man Jesus*, but as teaching something greater and deeper :—*the emotions* that arise in *the heart of God*, the great Father of all, as He looks on the sin and misery of His rebellious children.

It is true that, in a *literal* sense, the human alone can weep; yet I look on those tears, as they flow down the

Saviour's face, not so much as an index of *human* feeling as of the emotional perturbations of the Deity within—the tears of Deity over the impenitence of man. “He”—the Man—the Mediator—God, “wept.”

The tears of Deity ! What a paradox ! Can the Infinite have the attributes of the finite ? Can God have the susceptibilities of man ? Can He, whose inner calm no tempest can disturb, no storm raise to billows, *weep* ? Are *tears*—whether you take the word in a literal or a figurative sense, the difficulty remains—are *tears* not inconsistent with unlimited happiness ?

Whatever may be the theories entertained on this subject by the Stoics of ancient or of modern times, it is clear that the text teaches—

I. THAT THERE IS A VERY CLOSE RELATION BETWEEN THE INFINITE AND THE FINITE—BETWEEN GOD AND MAN. The same truth is taught, generally, in the Bible, and is forcibly illustrated in the whole history of Christ. Our knowledge is not absolute or perfect, but relative and approximative. We know nothing as it *really* is—as God does. Our idea of *wisdom* does not correspond to His, in every shade of colour ; so of any other attribute, object, subject, fact. What we call *truth*, may not be, and probably is not, *truth really*. I draw a line, and call it a *straight line*. My eye cannot detect the undulations ; yet when my vision grows stronger—or, which is the same thing, when it is aided by a microscope—I see the line is not *straight*, but *curved*. May not our mental faculties, as well as our bodily organs, lead us to call things by a wrong name—call *truth*, &c., what is *truth*, &c., *only by approximation* ?

It is true that God cannot rejoice, weep, &c., *as we do* ; yet in the Divine Being there may be something *analogous*—something to which our ideas of joy or sorrow may be approximations. This is in perfect harmony with the teaching of the Bible. “He was *grieved*,” &c. “It *repented*,” &c. “It *grieved* Him at *His heart*.” “My *heart* is turned within

me." I know it is fashionable to explain away such expressions as if they had no meaning, but were used simply to fill up the picture, or give uniformity to the plot of a dramatic poem. I believe, however, that they have a *definite* meaning, though we may not be able to arrive at a correct interpretation. If we cannot *now*, we may *hereafter*. Though we may not be able to examine every corner of the shrine by the glimmering light of the lamp of reason ; yet, when the whole temple of truth is illumined by the light of heaven, nothing may escape our observation. I do not argue that the expressions quoted are *absolutely* true, but that they are *the nearest to the truth* that can be formed with our language. As it would be impossible to express the deep thoughts of Kant, or the sublime ideas of Milton, in the language of the Feejee, or make intelligible to the Bushman the demonstrations of La Place, so it is impossible correctly to express the ideas of the Infinite in the language of the finite, or bring the thoughts of God down to the exact level of our understanding. "God's thoughts are not as ours," &c. They can be expressed in our forms of speech only by approximation, as an infinite series may be expressed by a mathematical formula.

With the limitations expressed in our foregoing paragraphs, it may be said that the Bible as a whole, and the text in particular, teaches that *God can feel*. "We have not a high priest," &c.

The anthropomorphic idea of the Divine Being—attributing to God the failings of man—has been wonderfully popular among wild savages and enlightened sages. "God is ever jealous, and a lover of confusion" was the belief of the greatest of Athenian legislators. Many have entertained the heartless theory of the Pantheist, who regards all objects from the brilliant orb of light, that buries from the view of mortals all other luminaries in its overpowering glare, to the insect that crawls amid the filth of earth, or the living atom that swims in its ocean-drop, not as *the works* of God, but as *God himself*—visible emanations from the Unseen—

finite *forms* of the Infinite. Others have believed that God created the universe at a period unlimitedly past, and left it to laws inviolable and eternal ; and that all changes are the results of these laws, and are therefore chemical, mechanical, or organic ;—that man is like the bubble that floats upon the stream, which is the same in nature as the water on whose surface it appears ; which, after moving a short distance, reflecting the rainbow beauties of the sunbeam, breaks and disappears for ever ;—that man lives and acts, and then sinks to nothing. What a low conception of man's gigantic soul and eternal destiny ! Can any one persuade himself to the belief that man—who, upon the field on which he struggles, has left legible marks of his own greatness, which the tidal flow of social revolutions, the storms of antagonistic principles, and the length and solemnity of an unlimited futurity, can never obliterate ; that man, whose soul is a fire kindled from the altar of God ; a world whose future orbit none can trace, or tell his influence on the great system of universal being ; a pearl, to rescue which from the depth of ruin, God became incarnate ;—that man is but a bubble on the stream of time, or that the Deity is indifferent to his welfare ? What insult to reason ! What blasphemy against God !

I turn from these cold, cheerless views of the Deity with a heart silenced to despair, and hail the revelation given me in *Jesus*. *Here* God sympathizes with my weakness, pities my ignorance, and *weeps* over my impenitence. Oh ! how He *loves me* !—how He *cares for me* ! The love of Christ has a constraining power. “He knoweth our frame,” &c.

II. THAT, AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THIS CLOSE RELATION—THIS FEELING—WHICH EXISTS BETWEEN GOD AND MAN, HE IS DEEPLY AFFECTED BY MAN'S MORAL CONDITION, AND IS TRULY ANXIOUS FOR THE SALVATION OF EVERY HUMAN BEING. This is proved (1.) by what He has done—the Mosaic ritual, incarnation, atonement, spiritual influence ; and (2.) by what He has said :—“I have no pleasure” “Why will ye die ?” “How often would I ?” &c.

III. THAT THOUGH GOD FEELS FOR HIS REBELLIOUS CREATURES, AND WISHES THEIR SALVATION, IT CANNOT BE SECURED WITHOUT THE CONCURRENCE OF THEIR OWN WILL. Why does the Saviour weep? What can be the meaning of those tears? Are they the tears of hypocrisy, shed only to give us an impression that He feels; or are they the result of anxiety and deep feeling? Has He no power, who spake the universe into being, and beautified primeval chaos, hushed to calm the raging storm, called from the tomb the silent tenants of mortality, and said to the sick of the palsy, "Thy sins be forgiven thee?" He *feels* for the inhabitants of Jerusalem; else why does He weep? He is *anxious* for their salvation; else why do those tears flow? Why, then, does He not save them, and prevent the calamity over which He mourns? These are solemn questions, and not to be disposed of by saying that the decrees of God are hid from mortal vision. The answer is clear:—"They would not." *There was no concurrence of will.*

Physical power in the case of Jesus had no limit, but moral power, *in every case*, has. The Saviour might have effected a change by the former, but not by the latter; for it had been tried. Were a change effected in the soul of man by physical power, man would cease to be man, and another being would be evolved out of his substance. Moral means—the only means that can be brought to bear upon a moral creature—had not, in the case of the Jews, answered the desired purpose. The writings of inspired men, the powerful ministry of John the Baptist, and the melting influence of Incarnate love,—all seem to have been in vain. "They resisted the Holy Ghost." Now the crisis is past, their probation is over, their salvation is hopeless, and the Saviour weeps over the impending woe!

In this tragedy you, my brethren, may read a lesson. The impenitence of the Jews, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the tears of Jesus, speak to you in thrilling eloquence. Jesus is the same. He still pities the impenitent, and weeps

over those with whom His Spirit has ceased to strive, and whose destruction is therefore certain !

Your case is yet hopeful, for "He waits to be gracious." Blessed words ! *He waits ; yet only waits.* Delay is dangerous. Let the power of a Saviour's love, and the eloquence of His tears, persuade you to submit to His kind rule, that He may no longer weep, but rejoice in anticipation of your future destiny.

EVAN LEWIS, B.A.

SUBJECT :—*Christ's Way of Dealing with Bigotry.*

"Strive to enter in at the strait gate : for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."—Luke xiii. 24.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Twenty-first.

JESUS CHRIST was what, in the present day, would be termed a practical preacher. He had not so much to do with God's decrees as with man's duty. He came that all might have life. But the Jews, among whom He labored, were a narrow-minded, bigoted sect. They had long been accustomed to enjoy special favors, and had come to the conclusion that God was the God of the Jews only, and not the Gentiles also ; that all except the seed of Abraham were made to be destroyed. They were the "little flock"—the "dear people." No one was *sound* who did not subscribe to this article in their creed.

It is probable that some of our Saviour's teachings, mentioned in verse 22, were somewhat of too universal a character to suit this narrow faith ; and the person who, in verse 23, interrupted Him, was anxious to know His real sentiments ; and therefore—determining to know at once if He were orthodox—"said unto Him, Lord, are there few that be saved ?" This question was not worth a personal reply ; but embracing the opportunity to warn His audience of their danger, and tell them of their present advantage, "he said unto *them*, Strive," &c. The words furnish a reply to two

errors which exist at the present day. First: *That limited view of the provisions of God's Gospel which prevents salvation from being offered to all*;—and, Second: *That extended view of God's mercy which teaches that none shall be lost, however they may now despise God's goodness*. Both these we hold to be pernicious, soul-destroying errors; and hence, without gratifying idle curiosity, we are to tell men to embrace the offered salvation now, or they shall for ever perish.

I. THAT THERE ARE DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY TO HEAVEN. Hence the term *strive*—contend, wrestle, fight; and the gate is called the *strait* gate. There are the opposition of friends, the frown of the world, the sneers of companions; sometimes worldly interests, evil habits, and always satanic agency, &c. These make it a fight—a continual contest.

II. THAT NOTWITHSTANDING THESE DIFFICULTIES, SALVATION IS POSSIBLE. There are obstacles, but they may be overcome; there must be a combat, but there may be a victory: there must be a race, but all have it in their power to secure the prize. The command implies this. Jesus never orders impossibilities. Say this power is natural, or the gift of the Holy Spirit;—I care not. Both are from God, and either one or other is wherever the Gospel comes. Men can comply with its terms, and be saved. We read, “No man can come unto me.” &c. In this and all such places, the word *can* is used in its figurative and popular sense: just as we say of a drunkard, He cannot leave off drinking; or a thief, He cannot refrain from stealing. We *cannot* because we will not, and this is our guilt.

III. THAT SALVATION IS POSSIBLE TO US ONLY IN ONE WAY. Enter not *any* gate, but *the* gate. Two ways of salvation have been revealed—Do, and live; Believe, and live. The former is now available, for all have sinned. Take what view of the case you may, that we must grant as the fact. *We* have broken the law, and it can show us no mercy; but the

Gospel brings pardon for sin, and eternal life to all who obey it. This is the new way by which God can be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly. Through what Christ has done, He can pardon every penitent sinner, while His throne remains established in righteousness, and His law, in all its dignity, is upheld. "Other foundation," &c.

IV. THAT THIS ONE WAY MUST BE PURSUED, PERSONALLY AND IMMEDIATELY. First: *Personally*. There are some things we do by proxy. We send our representatives to parliament, and they make our laws and preserve our rights; our armies to the field of battle, and we at home share the rewards of their success. A father can labor, and the son inherits the wealth; but in the procuring spiritual blessings, and reaching heaven, we must labor ourselves. Hence the parallel passage in Matthew reads, "Strive *ye*." Secondly: *Immediately*. "For many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in," &c. The antithesis is not, as some have supposed, in the words "strive" and "seek," but in the present and future. Now, if you strive, it is possible:—the time comes when you shall seek in vain. "When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and He shall answer and say unto you, I know ye not whence ye are. Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."

ANDREW BOWDEN.

SUBJECT :—*The Conquest of Self the Greatest Victory.*

"He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city."—
Prov. xvi. 32.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Twenty-second.

THERE has been much hero-worship amongst us of late. The popular *ideal* of heroism is military bravery. Men who have returned from the field of battle have been laden

with honours, and welcomed with the highest ardour and enthusiasm ; but those who have, for many years, been sustaining a deadly struggle with ignorance and vice, in the dark retreats of our large towns, have been left to pursue their great battle unnoticed and unknown.

Now, whilst admiring, in some respects, the heroism that shed blood for its home and its country, we learn from this passage that there is a higher order of heroism than that which is based upon military distinction ; there is a nobler courage than that which can encounter physical danger ; there is a grander warfare than that of arms. (1.) This conquest of self implies that there is a *ruling power* implanted in man, by which he was intended to govern his own "spirit." This is reason, conscience, &c. (2.) It implies that *the spirit of man is in a state of anarchy*—that it will not be ruled ; that there are certain insurrectionary forces which rise up in rebellion against this ruling power. "There is a law in the members warring against the law of the mind." (3.) It implies that *personal religion is self-subjugation*. By divine influence man is enabled to rule himself. The passions are subdued ;—the revolt in man's nature is quelled ;—reason and conscience are reinstated in their throne ;—harmony and order are established. The passions, which once governed with an iron sway, now *obey* ;—reason, which once was a slave, resumes her rightful authority. Thus the Christian is *king*, as well as a priest. He is made "*more than a conqueror*."

I. THE CONQUEST OF THE HEART IS GREATER THAN THAT OF A CITY, BECAUSE THE ENEMY IS MORE POWERFUL. (1.) To rule the spirit is to overcome the strongest impulses of our nature, which were intended to be servants, but have usurped the position of *masters*. These are ambition, avarice, pride, the love of distinction, the thirst for power and fame, the desire for sensual indulgence, the spirit of emulation, rivalry or retaliation, &c. These have usurped the throne of dominion in man's nature. They have ruled the intellect,

the conscience, and the life; yea, they have been the sovereigns of the world in every age. (2.) This foe is strengthened by habit. Our perverse tendencies, by repeated indulgence, become deeply rooted habits. Habits are chronic diseases of the *mind*. They can be removed only by a painful kind of moral amputation. The right eye must be plucked out, the right hand cut off. What a foe to conquer is habit! Reason may protest, conscience may reproach and condemn, the spirit may groan beneath its power,—but there it sits, bidding defiance to our best energies. (3.) This foe is strengthened by prejudice. When a sinful heart is arraigned before the bar of conscience, it calls in great pleaders for its defence. It justifies sin by appealing to antiquity, to great names, to the custom, fashion, and social usages, &c. (4.) This foe is reinforced by self-interest. The most serious questions are viewed only in the light of the shop window; the most weighty concerns are attended to only as they affect our secular interests. The solemn obligations of religion are considered when there is nothing to do; when it will involve no sacrifice of ease and comfort; when Christianity doffs the garb of the fisherman, is clothed in purple and fine linen, and becomes a mere conventional usage, and an element of respectability. “I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it. I pray thee have me excused.” (5.) This foe is backed by the spirit of the world, by popular opinion, by social usages and customs, and by the agency of Satan. This foe, thus sustained, is like an enemy in ambush, watching its opportunity to betray and ensnare. How very few conquer, compared with the hosts that are enslaved!

II. THE CONQUEST OF THE HEART IS GREATER THAN THAT OF A CITY, BECAUSE THE CONFLICT IS MORE DIFFICULT. (1.) The city may be taken by *force*. Not so the heart. No array of force can coerce man's *will*, or remove one error. Truth and argument can do this. God himself will not coerce the mind to love. He appeals to us by the

force of truth and tenderness of love. "Come now, let us reason together." Force has often been tried; but the history of the rack, the stake, and the dungeon, proves that man's spirit is far beyond the reach of such agencies, and can be influenced only by motives. (2.) The city may be taken by skill or science. Not so the heart. Here the profoundest accomplishments and the richest store of knowledge are of little avail. Science may bring the elements of nature into subjection; it may tame the ferocious beasts of the forest; it may harness the winds, and make the lightning our messenger; but it cannot subdue the heart. There may be the highest intelligence in the lowest homes of corruption; genius and animalism may co-exist in the same breast; the lamp of poetry may sometimes shine in the very *sepulchre of spiritual death*; learning has oft rendered a corrupt heart only more deadly and destructive in its influence. (3.) Applause and emulation will impel men in taking a city, but there is neither for the conquest of the heart. In *this* silent struggle there is no admiring multitude looking on. There are no martial strains, no banners floating o'er armed towers, no glittering ranks, no battle shout, to inspire the solitary combatant with courage. For him there are no stars and wreaths. No poet's song extols, no ardent voices applaud, the bravery of him who has conquered himself. (4.) The prospect of worldly distinction will animate him who takes the city, but not the conqueror of the heart. He can expect no earthly distinction: his name is not enrolled among the world's heroes. No page, no monument, records his triumph. Time was when those noble conquerors, who, through faith, subdued kingdoms; stopped the mouths of lions; quenched the violence of fire; waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens,—had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings—of bonds and imprisonment. "They were stoned, sawn asunder, tempted; were slain with the sword," &c. Even now, the man who conquers himself has sometimes to bear the look of pity, and the charge of fanaticism. The Pentecostal

inspiration was ascribed to "new wine;" Paul was pronounced "mad;" and Christ was deemed at one time, by his relatives, a fanatic.

III. THE CONQUEST OF THE HEART IS GREATER THAN THAT OF A CITY, BECAUSE THE VICTORY IS MORE NOBLE. (1.) The conquest of the city *develops* the worst principles and feelings, that of the heart *subdues* them. In the former there is the lust of power, the pride of victory. There are also the humiliation of defeat, the bitterness of disappointment and subjection, truth suppressed, hatred and revenge. In the latter there are peace and joy; the happiness of having trampled down all unbelief and pride; the ennobling influence of purity, benevolence, and hope. It is the joy of nature, when the tempest passes, leaving a brighter sky, a more balmy air, and a soil refreshed. It is the joy of the bondsman, when just liberated from his chains, tasting the delights of freedom. (2.) The conquest of a city is a scene of sorrow and desolation; the conquest of the heart is a *source of blessedness*. The former is a spectacle of horror. Homes and temples are enveloped in flames; the peaceful streets, where only sounds of industry were heard, are filled with slaughter and blood, with the cries of the wounded, and the groans of the dying; the gorgeous palace is pillaged; the treasures of the great are plundered, and every age, sex, and rank, are plunged into indiscriminate massacre and ruin. But he who conquers his own heart becomes a centre of influence for good. He makes the widow's heart to sing for joy. He secures the blessing of them that were ready to perish. He weeps with them that weep. He cheers the disconsolate, counsels the wandering, ministers to the indigent, and lightens the burdens of the oppressed. That heart becomes a well of water, sending forth streams to invigorate the fainting spirits around. (3.) The conquest of the heart introduces a reign of freedom; that of the city may only enthrone a tyrant. Man is in a state of bondage. Christianity comes to set him free! "If the Son of man

make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (4.) The conquest of the heart is associated with the highest dignity, the taking of the city with the deepest brutality and degradation. Ah ! how many have taken cities who have never conquered themselves ! They could control and discipline armed legions, but were powerless *within*. They gave laws to provinces and states, yet were slaves at home. Beneath that breast, decorated with many stars, was a heart that bade defiance to the voice that made a continent tremble. Conquer yourselves, and you will do more than Nelson, Napoleon, and Wellington ever did.

IV. THE CONQUEST OF THE HEART IS GREATER THAN THAT OF A CITY, BECAUSE THE PRIZE IS MORE GLORIOUS. (1.) Their spoil. The one gains a city, the other wins heaven—the soul's immortality—with all the honours and distinctions of the redeemed state. (2.) Their applause. The one secures the fickle applause of the multitude, embittered, too, by much detraction and envy : the other wins the applause of angels and the redeemed Church, with the public approval of the Great King. "Well done, good and faithful servant," &c. (3.) The memorial of their conquests. The one will perish. The noble city will crumble away ; the bronze of the marble statue will fall ; the glory of conquest will die ; the proudest exploits of the "brave" be forgotten ;—but he who conquers himself will never want a memorial to record his triumph ; for the heart, subdued and won, will by God's Spirit be raised from its ruins into a new creation, more glorious than the old one, over which the morning stars shall sing again, and the sons of God shall shout for joy. That depraved heart, now wrought into a spiritual temple, will be an imperishable monument of the Christian's victory. Whilst the company of warriors bear the palm, and sing the song of victory in heaven, they ascribe all their honours and glories to Him who made them kings and priests unto God, and washed them from their sins in His own blood. (4.) The fame of

the one will perish, the influence of the other will live. Piety gives to its possessor a twofold immortality. His spirit inherits the blessedness of heaven. His influence *survives* his dissolution, and may go down to many generations. The Pharaohs have perished, but Moses still lives. Ahab, with his courtly magnificence, is gone ;—Elijah has survived him, though a poor man. Babylon—with its monarchs, its temples, its palaces, and monuments—has departed. Daniel still remains. Piety thus invests the humblest men with a dignity and power which may survive the downfall of the proudest empires, and the noblest monuments of time. Ah! the time will come when mind will be deemed more important than matter ; when holy thought and virtues will be estimated a higher wealth than acres ; when the man who conquers a vice, explodes a fashionable error, or demolishes a debasing system, will be deemed a nobler warrior than the man who takes a city.

We learn from this—

First : *That moral courage is higher than physical.* Peter could smite off the servant of the high priest's ear, but he had not the moral courage to confess his Master to the Jewish maiden. Many are there that walk up to the cannon's mouth, who would be afraid to espouse a gospel truth that was unpopular, or abandon an error that was very fashionable.

Secondly : *This conflict we must all wage.* We cannot reach heaven with hearts unsubdued ; and this can be accomplished only by repeated earnest struggles. Our piety will conquer our sin, or our sin will overcome our piety. The spiritual and the animal, the heavenly and the earthly, cannot dwell in our breasts together.

Thirdly : *Defeat in this conflict is as disastrous as victory is glorious.* Though this victory can be achieved only by the help of God's Spirit, this does not supersede any exertion of our own. We are called to work because God worketh within us. Let us gird on the armour as brave soldiers,

arrayed in the noblest struggle; remembering that we have Omnipotence for our helper, and a crown of righteousness for our prize, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give us at that day.

J. GWYNNE HUGHES.

SUBJECT :—*Man.*

“And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua,” &c.—
Judges ii. 6—10.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Twenty-third.

THIS fragment of ancient history gives us several facts concerning our race.

I. THE MORAL OBLIGATION OF EVERY MEMBER OF OUR RACE. “The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua.” The whole obligation of man may be summed up in one sentence—“*Serve the Lord.*” All creatures are the servants of God, but they serve Him in different ways. (1.) Some *without* a will. Inanimate matter and insentient life do so. (2.) Some *with* their will. Brutes do this: they act with their instinct. (3.) Some *against* their will. Wicked men and fallen angels. (4.) Some *by* their will. Saints and angels. To serve Him in this way is the obligation of the race. But there is one condition indispensable to this, and that is SUPREME LOVE FOR HIM AS THE SOVEREIGN. This will do two things. First: *Induce man to attain an understanding of His law.* Secondly: *Prompt him cheerfully to obey it.*

II. THE SERVICE OF ONE GOOD MAN TO OUR RACE. “The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua; but after his death came the degeneracy. The incident before us suggests three things. First: *That a man can induce his race to serve the Lord.* Joshua did so. Secondly: *That a man, to do*

this, must himself be a servant of the Lord. Joshua was so. Thirdly : *That however useful a man may be to his race in this respect, he must die.* Joshua died. He “died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him,” &c.

III. THE MELANCHOLY SUCCESSION OF OUR RACE. “And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers : and there arose another generation,” &c. The races in the vegetable kingdom have a succession ; the races in the brute creation have a succession ; but the succession of our race differs from both in two respects. First : *The succession involves no extinction.* When a generation of trees die, they are gone for ever ; when a generation of brutes depart, they are gone for ever. Not so with man : he passes from this world to live in another. The mighty generations that are gone live on some other shore. Secondly : *The mode of the succession involves a moral cause.* We say the *mode*, not the *fact*. If the race continue to multiply as now, the limitation of the world’s area and provisions would require a succession. This planet was probably intended as a stepping-stone to another. Had there been no sin, however, instead of the succession taking place *through the grave*, it might have been through a “chariot of fire,” as in the case of Elijah.

IV. THE DEGENERATING TENDENCY OF OUR RACE. “And there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord.” History has many examples of this tendency. David, Peter, &c. Every man’s experience proves it. “Our souls cleave to the dust.” First : *This degenerating tendency is often found stronger than the most elevating influences of truth.* This generation fell, though the good influence of their ancestors had come down upon them. Peter fell in the very presence of Christ. Secondly : *This degenerating tendency indicates the necessity of a conscious reliance upon the gracious help of God.* “Hold thou us up,” &c.

SUBJECT: *God and His Universe.*

“And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel. And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.”—Hosea ii. 21—23.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Twenty-fourth.

THE prophecies of this book are so thickly enveloped in figure as to make the interpretation of some passages difficult. We learn, however, that they were addressed to the ten tribes; and under highly figurative representations, they disclose the crimes which Israel had committed, the judgments to which it was exposed, and the mercy which it might still obtain by returning to the one true and living God. The word Jezreel literally means “seed of God;” and taking it in its etymological sense, we shall regard it as designating the children of God, in every age and land.

I. THAT THE OPERATIONS OF THE UNIVERSE ARE UNDER THE INTELLIGENT DIRECTION OF THE GREAT GOD. The universe is here represented as in action:—“the heavens,” “the earth,” “the corn,” “the wine,” and “Jezreel,” all acting. There is nothing stationary; all things are full of labor. Creation is like a flowing river: there is not a particle at rest, and all move simultaneously towards the boundless.

Now, it is our happiness to know that all these operations are presided over by an Infinite Intelligence. The universe is not a self-acting machine, left to work itself out. The great Machinist is ever with it, observing and directing every motion. Read the hundred and fourth psalm. The fact that God presides over all the operations of the universe serves several important purposes. (1.) To account for the unbroken order of nature. Why is it that the ocean does

not overflow its boundaries? Why is it that those massive globes above, which move with such terrible celerity, swerve not from their orbits, and come not in collision? &c. Deny the superintendence of an omnipotent Being, and it is unaccountable. (2.) To impress us with the sanctity of nature. He is in all:—the brightness of the light, the beauty of the lovely, the majesty of the grand, the support of the feeble, the might of the strong. No temple more holy than nature. (3.) It serves to inspire us with reverence towards His greatness. “How great must he be?” &c.

II. THAT THE OPERATIONS OF THE UNIVERSE ARE GENERALLY CONDUCTED UPON THE MEDIATORY PRINCIPLE. “I will hear the heavens,” &c. One part of the universe is here represented as acting upon another, in order to produce, under God, a given result. In the material, as well as in the spiritual, world, God works out his plans by *secondary* instrumentalities. Let us look at this mediatory principle in its relation to man. (1.) In relation to him as a *material* being. How did we *receive* these corporeal frames? Not directly. They are the results of instrumentalities that have been at work for six thousand years. How is this corporeal frame *sustained*? Not as the Israelites were sustained in the wilderness—by miracles. There are agencies employed. How are they *broken up*? Not generally by a direct stroke from God. No! There are causes. Look at the principle (2.) in relation to him as a *spiritual* being. How does knowledge come to man? He has teachers. How, as a sinner, is he pardoned? “Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that though this man,” &c. How is he converted? God does not call him now as He did Abraham. There are ministers, &c.

III. THAT THE OPERATIONS OF THE UNIVERSE ARE MERCIFULLY SUBORDINATED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE GOOD. “Jezreel,” or the children of God, are here spoken of as receiving from God three things:—(1.) The blessings they devoutly sought. Jezreel prayed; and all nature is represented

as conveying its prayers to God. The universe labors for the man that truly prays. Prayer is answered not by miracle. (2.) The multiplication of their number. "I will say to them which were not my people," &c. The strongest desire of the truly good man is to make others good. This is here promised. The universe is working for this. Why kept up? To multiply the good. (3.) The heightening of the sympathy between them and their God. "I will call them my people," &c. What privilege this! What is the moral end of all the workings of this wonderful universe. To multiply the good, and to heighten the sympathy between them and their Maker.

SUBJECT:—*David's Lament over Absalom; or, the Tears of Parental Love.*

"And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son, Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"—2 Sam. xviii. 33.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Twenty-fifth.

THIS lamentation of David shows two things:—

I. THE FORCE OF PARENTAL LOVE. Whatever could have induced David to have mourned the death of such a son as this? All might have expected, that day, that the news would have fallen like music on his ears. There are two circumstances which might have induced men to have expected this.

First: *The corrupt character of Absalom.* In the short, strange life of Absalom, we discover several most depraved and morally repulsive attributes of character. There is *revenge* (see chap. xiii. 28, 29); there is *vanity*, (see chap. xv. 1); there is *ambition* (chap. xv. 4.); there is *meanness* (chap. xv. 5); *hypocrisy* (chap. xv. 7, 8). There is a tendency in such attributes as these to destroy all love for their possessor. Depravity in a wife is adapted to quench the love of a husband; depravity in a monarch is adapted to quench the love of his people; depravity in a son is adapted

to destroy the love of the father. Yet David's love was too strong for this ;—it clung to the monster.

Secondly : *The filial rebellion of Absalom.* He was not only corrupt in his character, but he was a malignant opponent to his father, the man whom he ought to have loved and obeyed. He had pledged himself to his father's ruin. His last purpose was a purpose to deprive his sire of his throne, his happiness, his life. David had no greater enemy in Israel than Absalom. One might therefore well have thought that the news of his death would have awakened joy rather than grief. But not so. So strong is parental love. This force of parental love indicates two things :—(1.) That there is still something divine in man. Love is from God ; and man, amidst all his depravities, still retains some small portion of this sacred thing. Depravity, though it has clouded and cooled it, has not quenched it. It often flames out, as in the case of David. Were love entirely extinguished from the human soul, there would be no hope for the recovery of man. The soul from which all love is expelled is irremediably lost. We thank God that love, in a million forms, still streams through our world. This strength of parental love indicates (2.) the love of the Infinite Father towards sinners. Is not David's love for his rebellious and depraved son, Absalom, an emanation and reflection of that love which the great God has for His depraved and rebellious children of earth ? The parable of "the prodigal son" confirms this.

II. THE BITTERNESS OF PARENTAL LOVE. What bitterness is in this cry :—"O Absalom, my son !" &c. Two things would give bitterness to David's feelings now.

First : *The memory of his own domestic sins.* David was a great poet, warrior, and king ; but, as the head of a family, there was much in his conduct to loathe and to deprecate. The carnality, the favoritism, the false tenderness, the want of thorough discipline, which he displayed in his own family, were in themselves heinous vices, and prolific sources of domestic misery. At this moment, perhaps, the memory of

his domestic sins terrified him. He might have thought,— O Absalom ! had I done my duty by thee in my own family, had I trained thee rightly, had I given thee a good example, such might not have been thine end. I blame myself, &c. Another thing which would give bitterness to David's grief over Absalom now would be—

Secondly : *His fear as to his future state.* O ! where is my son Absalom ? I have no hope that such a character can have entered the holy heavens ; and oh ! can it be that he is lost ? Can it be that my son is added to the number of the accursed ? From this subject we learn :—(1.) That good men may have most wicked children. Goodness is not hereditary. (2.) These good may, nevertheless, be responsible for the wickedness of their children. Home may be neglected, &c. (3.) That good men who neglect their children will one day, most likely, have to repent their conduct, &c.

SUBJECT :—*The Twofold Function of Personal Christianity.*

“ For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection ; knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that thenceforth we should not serve sin.”—Rom. vi. 5, 6.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Twenty-sixth.

“ For if we become kindred with him by a death like unto his, then shall we also be kindred with him by a resurrection : for we know this, that our old man is crucified as he was, that the body of sin might be destroyed, in order that we should no longer serve sin.” Such is Stuart's rendering, and it certainly makes the apostle's idea more clear than it appears in our own version. The subject of these words is *The twofold function of personal Christianity.* It has a crucifying and a resurrection work.

I. THE CRUCIFYING FUNCTION OF PERSONAL CHRISTIANITY. When Christianity enters a man, it crucifies something in him ; and what ? (1.) Not any of his native faculties or

sensibilities. It energizes, refines, and develops these. (2.) Not any of the ties of his moral obligations. Christianity does not remove man from under the law : it neither annuls nor relaxes his moral obligations. On the contrary, it gives a stronger revelation of duty, and mightier motives to obey. What, then, does Christianity *crucify*? “The old man.” By “the old man” he means the *corrupt character*. Why does he call this corrupt character “the old man?” Not because it is the original character of *humanity*. This is not true. The first character of humanity was a *holy* one. But because it is the first character of *individual* men. Account for it as you will, the *first* character which every *individual* man possesses is a depraved one. Hence the depraved character is the “old man.” It is this “old man,” with its “corruptions and lusts”—with its perverted views, affections, and principles—that Christianity crucifies. The fact that the apostle compares the process of destroying “this old man” to the crucifixion of Christ suggests three thoughts. First : *That it is a painful process*. The death of crucifixion was one of the most excruciating that the cruelty of the most malignant spirit could devise. To destroy old habits, gratifications, &c., is a painful work. It is as the cutting off a limb, the plucking out of an eye, &c. Secondly : *It is a protracted process*. No wound was inflicted upon the most vital part, that the agony might be perpetuated. The agonized life gradually, drop by drop, ebbed away. “The old man” cannot be killed at once. There is nothing so hard to die as sin. An atom may kill a giant, a word may break the peace of a nation, a spark burn up a city ; but it requires earnest and protracted struggles to destroy sin in the soul. No man grows virtuous in a day. Thirdly : *It is a voluntary process*. The work is likened to the *crucifixion of Christ* ;—and His crucifixion was voluntary. The other malefactors could not avoid their doom. Christ could. He could have freed Himself by a simple volition. He had power to lay down His life, &c. No one could have crucified Him contrary to His own will. It is so with the crucifixion of “the old man.” No one could do it for us. No one can

do it either *without* our consent or *against* it. If "the old man" is to be crucified, we must nail him to the cross.

II. THE RESURRECTION FUNCTION OF PERSONAL CHRISTIANITY. "We shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Three ideas are here suggested. First: *That the spiritual life of a Christian is a revived life.* It was not a new life that Jesus had when He came forth from His grave:—it was the old revived. The spiritual life of a Christian is that life of *supreme love to God* which Adam had, which belongs to our nature, but which sin has destroyed, and buried under evil passions and corrupt habits. Secondly: *That the spiritual life of a Christian is a divinely produced life.* "None but God can raise the dead," &c. Thirdly: *That the spiritual life of a Christian is interminable.* "I am he that liveth," said Christ, "and was dead, and am alive for evermore." Once the true spiritual of the soul is raised from its grave, it will die no more. It is an "everlasting life." Fourthly: *That the spiritual life of a Christian is glorious.* How glorious was the resurrection body of Christ! (Rev. i. 13—18.) "We shall be like him," &c.

The subject teaches us (4.) the *value* of evangelical religion; which is to destroy in man the bad, and the bad only, and to revive the good; (2.) the *test* of evangelical religion, which is dying unto sin, and living unto holiness.

SUBJECT:—*David and Goliath: A True Spirit, the Pledge of Victory in the Battle of Life.*

"Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied."—1 Sam. xvii. 45.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Twenty-seventh.

WE may look at Goliath and David, as they figure in this strange fragment of history, as illustrating the forms, spirit, weapons, and destiny of the great moral antagonists of our world—*good and evil.*

First : *These two men give us a picture of the forms of good and evil.* Evil in our world is like Goliath :—of gigantic stature, immense energy, and imposing aspect. It is a Colossus. Good in our world is like David in appearance :—small, weak, and insignificant ; possessing nothing to which the world attaches the idea of strength or glory. So it appeared in Christ : “ He was as a root out of a dry ground.

Secondly : *These two men give us a picture of the spirit of good and evil.* The spirit of evil, like that of Goliath, is proud, contemptuous, malignant. The spirit of good, like that of David, is that of humble trust and dependence upon God.

Thirdly : *These two men give us a picture of the weapons of good and evil.* Evil, like Goliath, has many and powerful weapons to fight its battles. Like Goliath, it is full-armoured. Armies and navies are on its side. The weapons of good are of the simplest kind : the sling and stone of David would symbolize them. “ The weapons of our warfare,” &c.

Fourthly : *These two men give us a picture of the ultimate destinies of good and evil.* Goliath, notwithstanding his great strength, proud vauntings, and mighty weapons, was slain, and his body given to the fowls of heaven, and the beasts of the earth. So it will be with evil. Like the image in the monarch’s vision, the little stone of truth shall shiver it into atoms. The end of truth will be like that of David—triumphant, and progressive in honor and influence in the empire of God.

But the subject on which at present we would fasten attention is, *A true spirit the pledge of victory in the battle of life.* Life is a battle. Physical life is a battle against danger and disease ; intellectual life is a battle against ignorance and error ; moral life is a battle against selfishness and wrong. He who has not felt life to be a battle, has not woken up as yet to the reality of existence. Now, a true spirit alone will make us victorious in this battle.

From the passage, we infer—

I. THAT A TRUE SPIRIT IS SUPERIOR TO THE GREATEST MATERIAL STRENGTH OF OUR FOES. Goliath was perhaps a second Samson, endowed with almost supernatural physical energy. "He arose," says Matthew Henry, "and came and drew nigh, like a stalking mountain overlaid with brass and iron, to meet David." David was a stripling, possessing not a tithe of the energy that belonged to his antagonist; and yet Goliath fell prostrate beneath the blow of this stripling. What was the cause of the victory? It was to be found in the spirit that animated the breast of David—the spirit of dependence upon God. "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear," &c. Difficulties and oppositions are nothing to a man who has the true spirit in him. "He that hath faith as a grain of mustard seed," &c.

II. A TRUE SPIRIT IS SUPERIOR TO THE GREATEST SOCIAL PRESTIGE OF OUR FOES. Goliath had obtained great fame as a warrior. He was renowned not only through Philistia, but also through all Judea. The sound of his name, everywhere, would strike terror into the heart of his enemies, and awaken courage in the bosom of his friends. *Prestige is a wonderful thing—a mighty power.* Give a man or an institution a prestige, and however feeble and worthless it may be, people will be disposed to yield to its influence. Many institutions, governments, books, live not on the ground of their merits;—but because of the prestige they have obtained. *But the true spirit will overcome this.* Goliath, with all his prestige, fell. Whatever may be the prestige of evil, the true spirit will overcome it. Idolatry, war, &c., have prestige, but they shall fall.

III. A TRUE SPIRIT IS SUPERIOR TO THE COMPLETEST ACCOUTREMENTS OF OUR FOES. Goliath was well-armoured: panoplied with all the accoutrements of ancient warfare. His robust frame—with bones like granite, and sinews like iron—was, in every point, thoroughly protected. David had no such armour, but only his simple sling and stone; yet Goliath fell. Huge evil, in our world, is well-armoured

—defended by armies, navies, governments, customs, learning, wealth ; but a man with the true spirit will overcome it. “This is the victory that overcometh the world.” &c.

IV. A TRUE SPIRIT IS SUPERIOR TO THE PROUDEST VAUNTINGS OF OUR FOES. How Goliath vaunted ! “And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him : for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance,” &c. Evil has ever been full of its vauntings. Its language to the good is, “Let us break their cords asunder.” The world has the same spirit of disdain for the Church that Goliath developed towards David. It virtually says, “Who art thou that comest to us with such simple instrumentality as the preaching of the cross ? Insignificant creature ! What art thou in our presence ? Dost thou vainly hope to put an end to our pleasures, our amusements, our engagements, our habits ?—to animate our literature, and control our government, by thy spirit ? Dost thou vainly expect to put down our idolatries, which long ages have rooted in the heart of humanity ?—our infidelities, which many of the most thoughtful of the race have philosophically defended ?—our pastimes and our gratifications, so dear to the heart of mankind ? But the church inspired with the true spirit may reply to all this vaunting, “Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear,” &c.

But *how* does this true spirit ensure victory in the battles of life ?

First : *It enables man to employ the best means.* It is fanaticism that makes men regardless of means. Enlightened devotion is ever anxious to select the most fitting. Though it feels that all success is from God, it presumes on no supernatural help. It is devoutly self-reliant ;—*i.e.*, it relies upon its own energies, under the blessing of God. The means which David employed now, though very simple, were the *most adapted*. He evidently had his method of attack definitely settled. He knew that the only unprotected part of his antagonist was his forehead. That was the point to be attacked ; and what so adapted as the sling and the

stone? David could stand at a distance from his huge antagonist, could calmly take his aim, and make his calculations with that expertness which, as a shepherd, he had acquired in the use of the sling and the stone. He could hurl the pebble at the vulnerable spot. The whole instrumentality seems well adapted. No miracle was used,—for no miracle was wanted. God's method of helping man is through the wise and right use of his own faculties; and the man of the true spirit learns this, and acts accordingly.

Secondly : *It enables man to use the best means in the best way.* (1.) With undaunted courage. Whilst under the well-armoured breast of his giant foe there pulsed the emotions of fear, in the unprotected bosom of David there was nothing but a fearless daring. He could sing, "Because the Lord is on my side, I shall not fear what man can do unto me." Paul had this feeling :—"None of these things move me," &c. Luther too. Confidence in God is evermore the foundation of true courage. (2.) It inspires the possessor with invincible determination. The man says, *It shall be done.* You may as well try to turn a planet from its course as to turn a true man from his purpose. Hence martyrdom, &c.

Thirdly : *It ensures the aid of God in the best use of the best means.* Felt dependence upon God is the settled condition and guarantee of Divine assistance in every work. The more we feel our need of him, the more He will help. "I come to thee," says David, "in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied." This is the spirit—the spirit that takes hold upon the energy of God. Brothers, get this spirit! Great intellectual endowments, vast and varied attainments, material strength, wealth, fame, social influence—all are worthless in comparison with this spirit. They are a curse in the absence of this. The man who has this spirit feels himself superior to all outward difficulties. Mountains may be piled in his way, but they depress him not. He looks calmly at them, challenges them to impede his progress, and bids them to be gone. "Who art thou, O great mountain?" &c.

SUBJECT :—*The Third Utterance of Christ on the Cross.*

“And he said unto Jesus, Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”—Luke xxiii. 42, 43.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Twenty-Eight.

THERE is this difference between these words of Christ, and any of the other utterances on the cross, that here we have a dialogue, and consequently we cannot enter fully and fairly into the meaning of this holy saying without examining the words of the other party with whom the conference was carried on.

I. THIS MAN WAS A HARDENED SINNER—A TRANSGRESSOR OF THE LAWS OF HIS COUNTRY, AS WELL AS OF THE LAWS OF HIS GOD. (1.) He had gone so far in the way of crime, that he allowed the justice of the sentence of death under which he was then suffering. (2.) When he was placed in this dreadful position, he was so lost to everything which was religious and rational, as to unite with the other criminal to revile the Saviour. “The thieves also which were crucified with him cast the same in his teeth.” (3.) These two men were of the lowest class of criminals, doubtless, of the party of Barrabas, who were guilty of depredation and murder. The heartless enmity of the priests and Pharisees was seen in all its virulence, in ordering that Christ should be crucified between such criminals; but their wrath was overruled to the praise of God. The hardened sinner was melted into penitence, and in the hour of His agony saved by Christ.

II. WHAT WERE THE MEANS THAT BECAME EFFECTUAL TO AWAKEN IN HIM A CONCERN FOR THE SALVATION OF HIS SOUL? The two criminals were equally near to the Saviour. What one heard and saw, the other heard and saw; and yet one continued in his hardened, impenitent, and guilty state;

the other, subdued and penitent, earnestly prayed for mercy. *The same Gospel is a savor of life unto life, &c.* The same hour witnesses one soul passing from death to life, and another sinking beyond the reach of salvation. The early education and religious advantages of these two men might have been widely different, though they had come to the same miserable end. The penitent thief might have had pious parents, who had well instructed him in the principles of religion. It might have flashed across his mind that even then, with broken hearts and sorrowful breasts, they were praying for him. Or perhaps he had heard the words of the kingdom during the public ministry of the Lord, and that this scene now recalled them. Or it might have been that the words of Christ, so tender and filial, which He had just uttered about His mother, or the still more wonderful prayer that He had offered for His enemies, had come home to his conscience, and penetrated his heart. Or perhaps this man had not had so many advantages as the other in early life, that sinning against more light had made the other more insensible to his destiny. Whatever were the means used, the result was as rapid in its progress as it was glorious in its form, and permanent in its duration. He stepped on the threshold of death destitute of any hope; but ere he had entered within its dark and dreary borders, light dawned upon his mind. He felt, thought, prayed, and was blessed.

III. THE CHANGE WAS WROUGHT BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY GHOST. Whatever might have been the means, through them came to his heart the current of life. Such a marvellous change could be the workmanship of no power but that of God. The change is so decided in every converted man, but not so instantaneously developed as this was. The general method owned by the Spirit of grace is a slow, gradual process; and this is the most satisfactory, especially in those who have led a notoriously vicious life. But the sudden change is more striking and impressive. This was a miracle of grace, as the turning of the

water into wine was a miracle of power. Water passes into wine, according to the established laws of nature, by a slow, tedious, but beautiful process, by means of the living vine ; but the power of Jesus could dispense with the vine, and the sunshine, and the months that usually elapse, and turn instantaneously the water into wine. So in the development of the work of grace in the salvation of the malefactor on the cross. The difference was that the general order and time were omitted. According to the established order of conversion, and growth in grace, the process that would have taken years to mature, was here accelerated and completed in a brief period. This was a master-workmanship of the dying Saviour, evincing His omnipotent power to save.

IV. THE DYING MALEFACTOR EXERCISED FAITH IN CHRIST UNDER THE MOST DISCOURAGING CIRCUMSTANCES. He believed that He who was suffering at His side was the Messiah. He appealed to Him as a *King*. "*Remember me when thou comest to thy kingdom.*" This was done, not when the winds and waves were yielding submission to the potent charm of His words ; not when the grave was giving up its prisoners in obedience to His command ; not when the tumultuous throngs were loud in their shouts of hosannah ; not when He was permitting the inherent glory of His nature to gleam forth through the mortal body which concealed it ; not when He was uplifting His arm to defend His followers, and defeat His foes ; but when He was in the depth of His humiliation—dishonoured, forsaken, helpless in the hands of His enemies, stretched as a malefactor on the cross. The faith of the dying thief shrinks not from comparison with the highest examples in the annals of the immortal heroes of God. Abraham's faith was great, but it fastened itself on God when He revealed Himself as the Eternal Creator, and the Almighty Ruler of all things. Moses' faith was strong, when, with meek confidence, He went into the presence of the mightiest monarch of the age, to demand the freedom of the oppressed people ; but the "I AM" had revealed Himself

in the burning bush, and promised His presence to succour and to bless. The ancient prophets believed ; but impressive scenes, special revelations, and displays of resistless power, had been manifested to them. The disciples of Christ believed, because *they saw His miracles*. But the thief placed confidence and trust when He was apparently impotent in the hands of His triumphant foes. He witnessed no other tokens of royalty around the cross than the crown of thorns, the mock robe, the sceptre of reed ; and even that had dropped from His bleeding hands. His faith in the Saviour was great, if we consider that (1.) *He believed in Him as the Messiah ;* (2.) *He believed in Him as One whose dominion and sovereignty would survive the shock of death ;* and (3.) *He believed in Him as One that would show mercy to the unworthy*. The salvation of the thief was extraordinary, but his faith was also extraordinary. In presenting this as an encouragement to death-bed salvation, it should be solemnly considered, and faithfully represented, that the faith which secured the salvation has seldom been equalled, and never surpassed.

V. WE SEE THAT, DURING THE SHORT TIME THAT ELAPSED BETWEEN THE EXERCISE OF THIS EXTRAORDINARY FAITH AND THE DEATH OF THE MALEFACTOR, THE VARIED EVIDENCES OF CONVERSION, AND THE RICH FRUIT OF GENUINE FAITH, WERE FULLY DISPLAYED. (1.) *Contrition and confession of sin*. "We indeed suffer justly ; for we receive the due reward of our deeds." (2.) *He expressed his admiration of Christ, and boldly defended His name and character from the accusations and aspersions of those who condemned Him*. "This man hath done nothing amiss." Another fruit of faith seen in the dying thief, was, (3.) *that he employed his expiring energies, and spent the last moments, in endeavouring to convince and convert his fellow-criminal*. "Dost thou not fear God, seeing that thou art under the same condemnation ?" (4.) *Then it might have been said of him, as it has been said of every converted man, "Behold, he prayeth."* His prayer was

addressed through the one Mediator—the High Priest, who alone can present our supplications acceptably to God in the right spirit—as an unworthy sinner, for the right blessing, to be remembered by Christ. That implied all he needed to enrich him for ever.

We now proceed to contemplate—

VI. THE WORDS OF OUR BLESSED REDEEMER TO THE THIEF, IN ANSWER TO THE APPEAL WHICH WE HAVE GLANCED AT. “Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” First: *The words imply that Christ was, in the conscious possession of supreme authority, even at that hour of His sufferings and humiliation.* Without any equivocation or hesitancy, He claims to Himself the right and the power of admitting whom He will into the paradise of God. He gives the condemned malefactor a title to enter there. Secondly: *We see, in these words, the principle on which prayer is answered.* The blessings that are asked for may not be given, but the blessings that are adapted to the real wants of the suppliant. “To-day thou shalt be with me in heaven.” This was far more, vastly greater, than the prayer implied, but it was just the gracious favour that suited his wants. He was dying. Of what use would it be to him to say that he should have temporal honours, earthly riches, or even office, in the kingdom of grace on earth? All such things, valuable in their place, would be an incumbrance and burdensome then. But to be assured that he should be admitted into the realms of everlasting glory, was a balm that soothed and healed the suffering, agonizing soul. Thirdly: *In this answer, we see that Christ, in His dealings with sinners, confirms His promises by utterances to correspond with the mental and moral hinderances of belief.* It would have been most natural for a man of the dying malefactor’s character to doubt the promise that he should be admitted into paradise. Therefore Christ confirms His promise with a solemn asseveration:—“Verily I say unto thee.” Fourthly: *These words solve the*

important and interesting question of the immediate conscious existence of the soul after death. “*To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*” The good pass, without entering any intermediate state, to their destined felicity ; the wicked and impenitent go, without lapse of time, into their own place. There is no change of character, or of principles, in death.

We close with two remarks.

First : *That the different views which persons entertain relative to Jesus Christ mould their moral nature to tenderness and penitence, or to hardness and guilt.* There were equally near to the Saviour two individuals—the one passing into heaven, the other sinking into perdition ; both in similar circumstances, and both dying. But one believed in Christ, loved Him, sought His help ; the other nursed in his breast irreconcilable enmity towards Him.

Secondly : *The danger of delaying turning to God is most impressively set before us here.* One hour’s delay would have placed this man beyond the reach of mercy.

T. THOMAS.

Dogmas Tested by Reason and Scripture.

THE MAGIC BOOK.

DOGMA.—Every word of the Bible is equally from God, the sacred penmen being the mere passive instruments of the Spirit.

Holders of this dogma.

This sentiment, or something very like it, was held in reference to the Old Testament, by the Jews, in the ages following the Christian era, when they had lost all appreciation of the spiritual significance of their Scriptures, and were fain to occupy themselves superstitiously with the letter. It was also held by some of the Jesuits, and is remarkably congruous with the genius of popery, which, without formally rejecting truth, presents its stiffly frozen or petrified corpse. In the eighteenth century, it appears as a fundamental and prominent principle in the system of Emanuel Swedenborg, and also

in connexion with the vagaries of John Hutchinson. It is widely received and hotly contended for among the less enlightened of the Protestants in the present age.

Reasons against this dogma.

i. There is no evidence in favour of it in Scripture, and there is much opposed to it in the structure of Scripture.

The passages usually relied on for its support would never of themselves have suggested the idea. This, originating in another quarter, has been brought to these passages, which, without misunderstanding and misinterpretation, will not yield it a shadow of support. On the other hand, we find that the books of Scripture are stamped in style and manner with the various characters of their authors. Sometimes several narratives of the same events differ in minor particulars, but in such a manner as not to impeach, but rather establish, their general credibility. We also find several reports of the same discourses, which differ in like manner in words and phrases, but substantially agree. When the writers of Scripture allude to natural phenomena, they obviously think and speak with the men of their time. Nor when they describe some revealed act of Deity in connexion with the natural world, do they transcend these modes of conception and speech. In some books of Scripture, after the great aim of the writer has been accomplished, and he has fulfilled his commission as a messenger of divine truth and law, reference is made to various ordinary personal details, which it were absurd to regard as dictated by the Holy Ghost. Sometimes the writer expressly declares that what he is writing is his own, as distinct from a divine communication. The words of erring, of wicked men, and even those of Satan, are sometimes recorded.

ii. It is practically irrelevant.

It can hardly mean to include the innumerable translations of Scripture in ancient and modern times, and to assert a universal miraculous superintendence of the details of translation. If not, then the benefit of verbal inspiration, if benefit there be, is confined to scholars. Yet, even in the original of the New Testament, the Septuagint version, not itself remarkable for accuracy, is largely quoted, and not always with verbal precision. Neither should it be forgotten, that no scholars are in possession of the autographs of the writers of Scripture, but only of copies, which, in words, vary without end. Lastly, if we suppose the Hebrew text of the Old Testament to have been thus dictated, it is an important question, whether we are to regard such dictation as extending to the points and accents, on the presence or absence of which the sense often so considerably depends. Thus even if the dogma be admitted, it can have little relation even to the scholar, and still less to the mere English reader.

iii. It is uncalled for.

The sacred writer had sometimes to relate events which he had himself seen, or which he had gathered from competent witnesses, sometimes to describe visions. Here his own faculties would suffice for the suggestion of words. Even when he uttered divine messages, commands, promises, threats, there appears no reason to suppose that it would not in many cases be sufficient for the ideas to be presented to his mind, which would according to natural method, clothe themselves in words. But this particular objection will, we think, appear with greater clearness, when we come to set forth what seems to be the truth, and to show that the dogma against which we contend proceeds on a false idea of the nature and aims of revelation.

Thus when we think it becomes evident, that the above dogma must, as it stands, be rejected, and that neither every part of the Bible is divinely communicated, nor even in every case where there is such communication, are the very words dictated by the divine Spirit.

Before proceeding, however, we wish also to show

The twofold injurious tendency of this dogma.

i. It diverts the attention of those who hold it from the real value and excellence of the Scriptures, and for an enlightened appreciation substitutes a superstitious feeling towards the Book as a fetish.

ii. By setting up for the book a fantastic and chimerical claim, the proper ground of contention with the infidel, where the believer would find an easy victory, is abandoned for one on which he is sure to be worsted. It is not the openness of the Bible to attack which encourages infidelity, so much as the folly of its defenders.

It is possible that in some cases this dogma has been hastily adopted, as apparently a proper form of honest reverence for the Bible, and as apparently the only eligible means of conserving its high claims. Should these lines meet the eye of any simple Christian who has thus been betrayed into assent, we counsel him to suspend his alarm till he has read our concluding paragraphs.

The proper notion of Revelation.

The above dogma appears to proceed on a fundamental misconception of the nature and aims of Revelation. When we consider the Bible simply and broadly, for the purpose of ascertaining its distinctive character and aim, we perceive that it is to be regarded not as a collection of supernatural propositions so much as a record of manifestations of God. These differ from his manifestations by nature and reason. They are open and direct, whereas the others have a degree of secrecy and indistinctness. They are therefore pure, certain, brighter, and fuller, whereas the others are mingled, uncertain,

more obscure and imperfect. God is in nature and in the human reason, but in the background—He is to be “felt after.” In the Bible he appears in the foreground, and can hardly be missed. In the one human activity is employed on nature, in the other, divine activity on man. The Bible is a record of God’s *open operations*, whereby He appears immediately in Person, and reveals His twofold name of righteousness and mercy.

These wonderful and glorious facts extend through a long series of ages, and are of manifold character. The appearance of the Son of God in our nature is the centre to which all the rest refer. These open divine operations may be chiefly classified thus: first, Miracle, or divine action; second, Word, or divine speech; third, Inspiration, or divine influence.

With regard to the second operation, we must remember, that the essential point is the immediate presentation of self-accredited ideas, by the divine mind to the human, without reference to the “divers manners” in which that may be effected, and which it were both irreverent and unscientific to restrict to the employment of words. Scripture terms on this subject, which literally express the employment of words, are often merely symbolic of this presentation of idea.

Inspiration is evident on consideration as being of two—not degrees, but—kinds. The first qualifies a man to deliver the divine Word to others in the name of God, his activity being restricted to such an understanding of the message as is necessary for its transmission, and to the clothing of it in words, if they have not been the vehicle of its communication. The second kind, by awakening the soul to unwonted activity, aids it in the discovery of truth. The subject of the first kind of inspiration formally delivers a message in the name of God. This is not the case with the subject of the second; yet his deliverance is really a divine Word, since it is the result of an open divine operation. The second kind of inspiration has a moral character, and raises the moral together with the intellectual faculties of the subject, in proportion to the elevation and extent of the moral truth to be discovered. These two kinds of inspiration may sometimes have a blent result in one production.

As we must not confine the second open operation, namely, that of the divine Word, to the verbal mode, this is equally unlawful in regard to the third, namely, Inspiration. It will be observed, however, that the employment of words is not excluded from either the second or the third operation. There were cases in which this was indispensable.

The Record of Revelation.

These various revelations ceased when they had formed a complete whole. But, having been given to the men of former ages, not for

their sakes only, but for the men of all time, they are committed to the Bible for transmission. The Bible is the record of revelation. Thus every generation enjoys the benefit of both orders of divine manifestation, to wit, the indirect of nature, the direct of revelation. What was a revelation once of God in his Son, with the twofold name of righteousness and mercy, is a revelation always. The faithful reader of the Bible knows that this end is thereby attained, that he has in this book a sufficient record of the past open operations of God which constitute revelation. He knows it, for he sees it; the Word is before him, the Spirit of the Word in his soul, raising his moral and intellectual faculties in proportion to the elevation and extent of the truth revealed therein. The Great Object thus reveals and accredits Himself as of Old. Such reader, seeing the end to be attained, knows also that whatever agency was necessary for the attainment of it has been put forth, that whatever means were necessary have been employed.

The problem concerning the nature of this agency and these means is therefore of secondary importance. It is moreover of so sacredly mysterious a character, that unpractical curiosity is rebuked; and so difficult withal, as to render a complete solution impossible. Yet, as it belongs to the history of redemption, we turn back for help to the consideration of the recorded open divine operations, since therein is involved the question of what was necessary to secure a sufficient record. We say then, first, with regard to Miracles, and other matters of history, that a sufficiently faithful record of them was secured, in what precise manner, we cannot know; secondly, with regard to the Word which had been previously received or visions which had been seen, a faithful report and description of them was secured in a way equally to us untraceable; and thirdly, with regard to the two kinds of Inspiration, that, when a man had been previously inspired, in either kind, in speech, we may rely on the record as a substantially correct report of his words, and that, when he was inspired, in either kind, while writing, we who read are in the same relation to the document as the hearers in the former case were to the speech.

Thus, belief in the Bible as the record of revelation logically precedes belief of its inspiration. We do not believe in the Bible because we believe it to be inspired, but we believe the inspiration because we believe in the Bible.

Not to confirm the truth, but for the sake of any whose prejudices may be removed by such information, it may be added, that the above sentiments, being in harmony with those of divines of all ages and of various communions, are orthodox in the proper, historical sense.

Old Standards and New ;

OR,

GENUINE AND SHAM ORTHODOXY.

RICHARD HOOKER.

WHEN the cry of heresy is raised against a disciple, let him not fear, but consider well the meaning of the sound. If it purport only that his belief differs from his accuser's, that may be to his credit. If that he disagrees with much of the indefinite and floating sentiment of the modern press, that may be necessitated by the steadfastness of his faith, and its correspondence to more respectable standards. But if it be intended to accuse him of divergence from Catholic teaching, then to show his agreement therewith will be his proper method of defence. Supposing this defence successful, he now certainly lies open to the charge of heresy of the first and second sorts ; since the wide difference is obvious between modern doctors and the great teachers of yore. As then he cannot agree with both, he will probably regard with some complacency the badge of heresy which connects him with the orthodoxy of the past, which is now called rationalism, mysticism, neology, and the like. Could we, in these articles, aid such a disciple in any measure, by showing him the footsteps of great confessors in the paths to which conscience and reason have led him, we should enjoy a sufficing reward. Certain it is, that were Richard Hooker alive now, he would be regarded as a rationalist and a mystic. To be convinced of this, the reader has only to cast his eye over the following extracts, which have been made, almost *ad aperturam libri*, from masses of similar material.

Richard Hooker's Rationalism.

“NATURE AND REASON.—The general and perpetual voice of men is as the sentence of God himself. For that which all men have at all times learned, nature herself must needs have taught; and *God being the Author of nature, her voice is but His instrument.*”

“When supernatural duties are necessarily exacted, natural are not rejected as needless. The law of God therefore is, though principally delivered for instruction in the one, yet fraught with precepts of the other also. *The Scripture is fraught even with laws of nature ; inasmuch*

* Ecclesiastical Polity, I., viii. 3.

that Gratian, defining natural right (whereby is meant the right which exacteth those general duties that concern men naturally, even as they are men), termeth "*Natural Right*," that which the "*Books of the Law and the Gospel do contain*." Neither is it vain that Scripture aboundeth with so great store of laws in this kind: for they are either such as we of ourselves could not easily have found out, and then the benefit is not small to have them readily set down to our hands; or if they be so clear and manifest that no man endued with reason can lightly be ignorant of them, yet the Spirit as it were borrowing them from the school of nature, as serving to prove things less manifest, and to induce a persuasion of somewhat which were in itself more hard and dark, unless it should in such sort be cleared, the very applying of them unto cases particular is not without most singular use and profit many ways for men's instruction. Besides, be they plain of themselves or obscure, the evidence of God's own testimony, added to the natural assent of reason concerning the certainty of them, doth not a little comfort and confirm the same.*

"Our words, when we extol the complete sufficiency of the whole entire body of the Scripture, must be understood with this caution, that the benefit of nature's light be not thought excluded as unnecessary, because the necessity of a diviner light is magnified.†

"But so it is, the name of the light of nature is made hateful with men; the "star of reason and learning," and all such other like helps, beginneth no otherwise to be thought of than if it were an unlucky comet; or as if God had so accursed it, that it should never shine or give light in things concerning our duty any way towards him, but be esteemed as that star in the Revelation called Wormwood, which, being fallen from heaven, maketh rivers and waters in which it falleth so bitter, that men tasting them die thereof. A number there are who think they cannot admire as they ought the power and authority of the word of God, if in things divine they should attribute any force to man's reason. ——— By these and the like disputes, an opinion hath spread itself very far in the world, as if the way to be ripe in faith were to be raw in wit and judgment; as if Reason were an enemy unto Religion, childish simplicity the mother of ghostly and divine wisdom.‡

"Cresconius the heretic, complained greatly of St. Augustine, as being too full of logical subtilities."§

Truly, we might almost suppose him to have been a prophet.

"INSPIRATION.—An instrument, whether it be a pipe or a harp, maketh a distinction in the tunes and sounds, which distinction is well perceived of the hearer, the instrument itself understanding not

* Ecclesiastical Polity, I. xii. 1. † ib. I. xvi. 4. ‡ ib. III. viii. 4. § ib. viii. 8.

what is piped or harped. The prophets and holy men of God not so. 'I opened my mouth,'* saith Ezekiel, 'and God reached me a scroll, saying, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat and fill thy bowels with this I give thee. I ate it, and it was sweet in my mouth as honey,' saith the prophet. Yea, sweeter, I am persuaded, than either honey or the honeycomb. For herein they were not like harps or lutes, but they felt, they felt the power and strength of their own words. When they spake of our peace, every corner of their hearts was filled with joy. When they prophesied of mourning, lamentation, and woes to fall upon us, they wept in the bitterness and indignation of spirit,† the arm of the Lord being mighty and strong upon them."‡

His Mysticism.

"FAITH IN REVELATION.—Other motives and inducements, be they never so strong and consonant unto reason, are notwithstanding uneffectual of themselves to work faith concerning this principle, if the special grace of the Holy Ghost concur not to the enlightening of our minds."§

See also, on this subject, the second extract above.

"PERSON OF CHRIST.—It pleased not the Word or Wisdom of God to take to itself some one person amongst men, for then should that one have been advanced which was assumed and no more, but Wisdom to the end she might save many built her house of that nature which is common unto all, she made not *this or that man* her habitation, but dwelt *in us*. The seeds of herbs and plants at the first are not in act but in possibility that which they afterwards grow to be. If the Son of God had taken to Himself a man now made and already perfected, it would of necessity follow that there are in Christ two persons, the one assuming and the other assumed; whereas the Son of God did not assume a man's person unto His own, but a man's nature to His own Person, and therefore took ——— the very first original element of our nature, before it was come to have any personal human subsistence. ——— By taking only the nature of man He still continueth one person, and changeth but the manner of His subsisting, which was before in the mere glory of the Son of God, and is now in the habit of our flesh.**

"NATURE OF ETERNAL LIFE.—Touching men, of all creatures living the chiefest and most eminent, they have their natural life, which the soul in the body causeth, and correspondent thereunto some amongst them a life ghostly, wrought by a force much diviner inhabiting the soul.††

"CAUSE OF ETERNAL LIFE.—Christ's flesh and blood are the cause of eternal life."‡‡

* Ezek. iii. 2, 3. † Ezek. iii. 14. ‡ Sermon V. § Polity, III. viii. 15.

** Polity, V. iii. 3. †† Sermon III. ‡‡ Polity, V. lxvii. 4.

“SYMPTOMS OF ETERNAL LIFE.—The life of God is nothing else but a spiritual and divine kind of being, which men by regeneration attain unto, Christ and His Spirit dwelling in them, and as the soul of their souls moving them unto such both inward and outward actions as in the sight of God are acceptable.*

“OBJECT OF HOPE.—The highest object of Hope is that everlasting Goodness which in Christ doth quicken the dead.†

“RIGHTEOUSNESS.—There is a glorifying righteousness of men in the world to come: and there is a justifying and a sanctifying righteousness here. The righteousness, wherewith we shall be clothed in the world to come, is both perfect and inherent. That whereby here we are justified is perfect, but not inherent. That whereby we are sanctified, inherent, but not perfect.”‡

Very suspicious passages.

“THE personal being which the Son of God already had, suffered not the substance to be personal which He took, although together with the nature which He had the nature also which He took continueth. ——— That one only point of Christian belief, *the infinite worth of the Son of God*, is the very ground of all things believed concerning life and salvation by that which Christ either did or suffered as man in our behalf. ——— Let us set it down for a rule or principle so necessary as nothing more to the plain deciding of all doubts and questions about the union of natures in Christ, that of both natures there is a *co-operation* often, an *association* always, but never any mutual *participation*, whereby the properties of the one are infused into the other.§

“If it be demanded what the person of the Son of God hath attained by assuming manhood, surely, the whole sum of all this, to be as we are truly, really, and naturally man, by means whereof he is made capable of meaner offices than otherwise his person could have admitted, the only gain he thereby purchased for himself was to be capable of loss and detriment for the good of others.**

“And concerning the grace of unction, wherein are contained the gifts and virtues which Christ as man hath above men, they make Him really and habitually a man more excellent than we are, they take not from Him the nature and substance we have, they cause not his soul nor body to be of another kind than ours is. Supernatural endowments are an advancement, they are no extinguishment of that nature whereto they are given.††

“CHRIST PRAYING.—That Christ, as the only begotten Son of God, having no superior, and therefore owing honour unto none, neither standing in any need, should either give thanks, or make petition

* Sermon III. † Polity, I. xi. 6. ‡ Sermon II. § Polity, V. lii. 3.
** Polity, liv. 4. †† Polity, iv. 6.

unto God, were most absurd. As man what could beseem him better, whether we respect His affection to Godward, or His own necessity, or His charity and love towards men?"*

The reader will remember that, in our last number, John Owen was tried by modern standards, and convicted of decided heresy on many fundamental points. It is sufficiently evident now, that, on the same principles, Richard Hooker deserves the like. These two divines, whose majestic spirits have doubtless long ago adjusted, in the kingdom of glory, their differences on other matters, agreed even on earth in such utterances as the above, which are now well-nigh drowned by the clamour of unreasoning excitement. Let, then, the present oracles of doctrine, ere they venture to repeat their charges against better men than themselves, pause for a season over the works of Richard Hooker.

Stars of Christendom.

ATHANASIUS.

THOUGH little of stature, Athanasius has obtained in history the surname of "The Great," as well as a place of importance. Both are chiefly due to his mental and moral worth. He is distinguished for penetration and depth; for firmness and constancy; for prudence and conscientious faithfulness in the sacred thing committed to his trust; for gentleness as well as needful severity. As Constantine the Great represents a turn in ecclesiastical politics, so does Athanasius in ecclesiastical life; for on that his inward convictions, his outward conflicts and distresses, were brought to bear. His inner greatness makes him the centre of the thought and strife of his time, the firm defence of Christian truth and freedom, the rock whence hostile waves ineffectually rebound, and his name the victorious banner of champions for privilege and faith. Indeed, his whole life, from the time that he accepted the responsibilities of a high calling in the Church, became, in its vicissitudes of joy and sorrow, of honour and shame,

* Polity, V. xlviii. 5.

evermore identified with the great cause. On this he staked his all : and his watching and prayer, his governing, his meditation, his speaking and writing, his working and suffering—all relates to the one great business of his life. The cause for which he had suffered and wrestled ; his daily and nightly care, which had occasioned him so much abuse and ever-renewed exile ; the object of his burning zeal and tender love—he was permitted to see at last victorious. Then honest prejudice sank before the might of truth, both the cunning and the violence of opponents aided their frustration, scales fell from many eyes, and what had at first been regarded as newfangled and untrustworthy, was seen to be the expression of primeval Christian truth, and was deposited in the treasury of the Church, ere—at the council of Constantinople, in 381—it received her final outward sanction. He who, for his steadfast and consistent confession, had hardly for a time where to lay his head, was left at last to an undisturbed ministry, and a quiet old age. Thus his life, like his character, has a fine completeness ; and he departed in peace when his work was done, which had been to glorify throughout the world the name of his Saviour as the true Son of God.

The early history of Athanasius is involved in obscurity, but 269 was probably the year, or nearly so, of his birth. The beginning of the fourth century was a critical period for the Church ; a time of transition from the Church, patient of persecution, to the imperial churchdom. The powerful of the earth were about undertaking the cause of Christianity as vassals of Christ ; as guardians, at first, of external affairs,—that is, of the political relations of the Church. But as the external and the internal are connected, these guardians of the former were, almost involuntarily, tempted to interference with the latter ; and, in the despotic manner of the heathen empire, were too often able to proceed to the manifold distraction and corruption of the life of the Church. This called forth ecclesiastic counteraction—the beginning of the struggle, which lasted for many centuries, between the political and the spiritual power, in which Athanasius will soon appear a leader on the side of the Church.

He was early dedicated and fashioned unto the service of the Church. The man by whose side he afterwards stoutly contended against the disfiguration of the truth, Alexander,

bishop of Alexandria, is said to have observed him among a troop of boys, imitating in play the administration of baptism, and to have been thus determined to rear the boy to the ecclesiastic calling. Alexandria afforded rich educational advantages, and a peerless theologic tradition—witness the names of Clement and Origen. Athanasius appropriated both kinds of learning, the classic and the ecclesiastic, and rapidly attained a matured ability to deal with the highest theologic problems. Even as a youth, he produced an important work, whereby both the long task of Christian apology, which had lasted hitherto, was brought to a conclusion, and the great problem of the new time entered upon—to wit, the settlement of Christian dogma within the sphere of the Church. We refer to the two didactic writings, constituting one whole: “Discourse against the Greeks,” and “Concerning the Inhumanation of the Word.” We recognise here the pupil of the Alexandrine masters of the second and third centuries, living in their lightsome first principles, but rejecting the heterogeneous and fantastic—a genuine Christian spirit, holding fast only what commends itself to Christian sentiment, and leading it on to further development, while the rest is eschewed. We see, moreover, a truly scientific spirit, contemplating every single thing in its wide connexion, and leading it back to its principle, so that he need not dispute in detail, but compel adversaries to a contest on fundamentals.

Athanasius is occupied in this work with the highest problem :—God, man, world, good and evil, sin and redemption. Heathenism enters the universe as an aberration from the truth. It is condemned even in its genesis: it is a form of evil—which itself is absolutely null, unreal—into which man and his thinking, turned away from the truth of his life, has been deluded. He fancies it something, whereas it is nothing, and thus not from God, who is pure Reality and Truth, and from whom the real only proceeds. All, moreover, proceeds from God through His Word, His eternal and perfect Image, whereby He produced all, supports and governs all in rich manifoldness and symmetry, which presents a fine harmony, in which the Divine Wisdom may be perceived. This Word, or Logos, brings about man’s knowledge of God, and his communion with God. Man, formed after this Word as his prototype, after the type of God, discerns, as he contemplates himself, this his prototype, and

God therein, of whom it is a genuine revelation. By the Word also he partakes of the incorruptible divine life. By sin he has forfeited both of these excellencies, is sunk in folly and mistake, in vanity and corruption. But the reasonable, immortal soul is not therefore entirely forsaken by God and His Word, for even on Him does its reasonableness and immortality rest. As means of divine knowledge He has presented to it the creation, which manifests Him in its order and harmony. In consequence of the defilement of the soul, this means has proved insufficient to lead it to the knowledge of the true God; and in the place of this there has arisen polytheistic and pantheistic fancy, confounding the Creator and the creation. Only by the Eternal Word Himself condescending to humanity, and becoming flesh, could the original divine knowledge and communion be restored. This restoration was prepared by the holy ministry of the law and the prophets, which was given and appointed not merely for Israel, but belonging to the whole world; and by the efficacy of the same, there arose from the depth of man's divinely-related nature a yearning after redemption. According to His faithfulness, God could not allow the beings participant of His Word to perish; and His truth required that the law of death, ordained for sinners, should be fulfilled. Redemption was therefore necessary: the Word must become participant of mortal flesh. He who comprehended all things in Himself could now offer up His flesh as a Sacrifice for all, and thus fulfil the law of death for all. And as His death avails as the death of all, so His resurrection comes to pass for the benefit of all. In Him the incorruptible divine Life is restored. Thus He, by whom all were made, is the same also by whom all are restored to the original glory which they had lost. The Creator was also to be the Redeemer. Moreover, we now become children of God, since we receive the Word, where-with indeed we receive the Spirit of the Son of God into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Forasmuch as the Spirit dwells in us, sin and death are destroyed in us, righteousness and life renewed. The appearance of the Word in a human body was nothing incongruous; since, already dwelling in the whole of the world as in a body, He can dwell also in a single part, as in His body. By this again, His all-comprehending Life is not excluded. This appearance was also to effect that they who would not acknowledge Him from His

general providence, might acknowledge Him, and the Father through Him, from the works which He performed by His humanity.

Again : since the power of the appearance of Christ has subsequently so evinced itself, that with sin the whole of heathendom is approaching its downfall, and a new life of righteousness, love, and peace, is inaugurated, there arises thus an evidence of the absolute truth, the divine origin, and character of Christianity.

These are about the fundamental traits of the Apology, on its positive and negative side, contending with error, and establishing the truth. In what manner Athanasius here anticipated the polemics to which he was soon led by excitement in the Church, and his position therein, will be evident from the sequel.

(To be continued.)

LITERARY NOTICES.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books ; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the Author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE HULSEAN LECTURES FOR THE YEAR 1856. By the REV. HARVEY GOODWIN, M.A. Cambridge : Deighton, Bell, and Co.

THE PREACHING OF CHRIST. By JAMES AUGUSTUS ST. JOHN. London : Chapman and Hall.

Now, when a miserable Docetism appears as a plague-spot on the Christianity of the day, it is pleasant to see Churchmen rousing themselves to put forth sound teaching on the Person of Christ. This is the centre of revelation. It matters comparatively little what a man holds, or does not hold, if he makes the living Christ at once his God and his Brother, and is tenacious equally of both ;—feeling that if the twofold Christ be denied in either aspect, He can be of little service in the other. In the first age, the difficulty was to discern the Word through the veil of the flesh ; in ours, the danger is to lose sight of

"the flesh," and view a monstrous Jupiter-like phantom, the doctrine concerning whom is no Gospel, and faith in whom can have no real efficacy. Mr. Goodwin's object, in these eight lectures—which are connected, by "a certain continuity of purpose," with a former course delivered in the preceding year—is to show the Deity by means of the manhood, and to demonstrate that which makes us feel the latter the most, is precisely what brings the former the most clearly into view. This aim he reaches by the aid of delicate moral criticism, of which he is a great master. We are conscious of obtaining deeper insight into the evangelic text as we follow him, and as we experience satisfaction with the route where the prospects are novel and beautiful and the ground is firm, we thank and praise our faithful guide. The general motto is—"The glory of the Only-begotten of the Father seen in the manhood of Christ." The subjects of the Lectures are as follow :—I. Introductory. II. Christ a Child and a Boy. III. Christ praying. IV. Christ in His human sympathy. V. Christ with His human friends. VI. Christ teaching. VII. Christ dying, and preparing for His death. VIII. Christ's eternal Manhood, and our completeness in Him. We may add that the book has unmistakeable marks of extensive and accurate scholarship. Buy it, reader, and the preceding course as well; and if you have, as we hope, a clear head and a right heart, you may learn much from both volumes, and thank us for the advice.

The only fault of Mr. St. John's admirable book is, that it is small and somewhat fragmentary. It displays deep insight of the significance of the gospels, and a large possession of their spirit. The writer has the mind of a Christian, of a philosopher, and of a poet. He has scholarship and a cultivated taste. He has travelled, with the inner and outer eye both open, amongst the scenes of the evangelic narrative. He uses choice speech. This work is worth a load of the usual more systematic treatises. Every page bristles with keen and polished thoughts, and sparkles with their brilliance and beauty. There is nothing second-hand, nothing commonplace; all is fresh, suggestive, stimulating. More light is sometimes thrown on a chapter of the gospels by one of the sections of this unpretending little book, than by a lengthy and elaborate commentary in the usual style. We cheerfully confess gratitude to the author. The want of our times is, that the character of Jesus, exhibited as is done here, should be brought powerfully to bear on the minds of men. We would respectfully suggest to Mr. St. John the desirableness of preparing a larger and more complete work on the Gospel history, in the same spirit as this. Meanwhile we should like to see this in the hand of every young minister, of every Sunday school teacher, of every thoughtful learner. We know of no book fitted to act more healthfully on the soul, whether in relation to its own growth, or its influence on others.

MEDIAEVAL PHILOSOPHY, &c. By FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE, M.A. London and Glasgow: Richard Griffin and Co.

THIS volume is the third of four, which, completed, will form a History of Philosophy, re-written and greatly enlarged, for the new issue of the *Encyclopaedia Metropolitana*. The first volume deals with ancient philosophy, the second with that of the first six centuries of the Christian era, the present with that of the Middle Ages, and the fourth—which we await with impatience—will conclude with modern philosophy, what—if the merits of the last volume equal, as may be expected, those of the first—will be the most valuable production of the great author: a history of philosophy in earnest, scientific spirit, and the thorough information of original research, unapproached by any other in our language. We know but of one other work worthy of comparison with the present volume. We mean Dr. Hampden's *Lectures on Scholastic Philosophy*. But, in many respects, this is far superior to that of the present Bishop of Hereford. It does far more justice to the men of whom both treat; enters more into detail; penetrates with a more loving and a deeper insight into the men, their times, and their works; and shows the vital mutual relations of all these. The book has more than the fascination of a novel, and all the profundity proper to the subject. The principal figures in the volume are Boethius, Erigena, Pope Gerbert, Lanfranc, Anselm, Abelard, Hugo de St. Victoire, Peter Lombard, John of Salisbury, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventura, Duns Scotus, Roger Bacon, and Raymond Lully. Mr. Maurice does not write about what he does not understand. He has evidently well studied the works which he describes and estimates. We specify the sections on Erigena, Abelard, Albertus Magnus, and Thomas Aquinas, as particularly valuable. In that on the last we have a complete epitome of the *Summa Theologiae*, a sum of the sum, from which they who cannot find time for the study of the work itself may obtain a very correct idea of its nature, spirit, and contents. The acknowledged deficiency of this volume is the comparative cursory treatment of the Arabian sects; but this defect—made prominent, and even somewhat exaggerated, by the writer's candour—need not cause discontent or misgiving. Had it been possible, we should certainly have liked to follow such a leader through the mazes of Arabian speculation; but shrinking with the sensitiveness of an honest scholar from seeming to be oracular on the strength of second-hand information, Mr. Maurice confines himself on this head to general views, and thus confirms, if that be necessary, our confidence in the other departments of the volume. Yet what he does say, even here, is more luminous, and has more interest and solid value, than the fuller disquisitions of some more pretentious writers.

PSALMS, HYMNS, AND PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE, FOR CHRISTIAN WORSHIP. London: Partridge and Oakey.

To provide Hymns for the people is a great, responsible, and difficult work. Hymns have more immediate influence on the popular mind than all the tomes of divinity that were ever written. By his hymns Luther popularized the Reformation; by his hymns Watts popularized Independency. On the common ground of hymnic devotion, the cultured and the uncultured can meet, sympathize, and blend mind and heart in blessed praise. "This work," we are informed, "has been compiled by the Congregational Ministers of Leeds." It was much needed. As much as one-third of Watts's hymns remain unused in the majority of congregations, and the remaining two-thirds, though most excellent, are of insufficient variety. Hence the rise of multitude of "Supplements." Then came the idea of one book comprising the best of Watts's, and a selection from others. Though the present book is not the *first* constructed on that idea, it is by far the *best*. The editors have come to their task with full conscientiousness, intelligence, and ability; and the result is incomparably the best hymn book of its class—a book which will suit at once the most fastidious and the plainest Christian. The volume begins with the Psalms, which are taken chiefly from Watts's version; then, without a break in numeration, follow the Hymns, classified according to their subjects;—The Psalms and Hymns together amounting to nine hundred. Fifty passages of Scripture, arranged for chaunting, complete the volume. The last feature adds greatly to the value of the book; and it is much to be desired that the intelligence of the churches were sufficient to appreciate such an aid to fuller and more delightful common praise. There are convenient indices—one of subjects, another of texts, and a third of metres—besides the usual table of first lines. We are so charmed with the book as to be in no humour for fault-finding; yet some defects there are. We wish the hymns on "The Life of the Lord Jesus Christ" had been multiplied fourfold. Again: although there are fewer insipid hymns, and more of true inspiration here than in any other book we ever saw, yet there are some—perhaps a score—of the former; while some of the latter class are absent, to our wonder and grief. We miss several fine old hymns; for instance, that grand one—

"Come, Holy Ghost! our hearts inspire,
And lighten with celestial fire:
Thou the anointing Spirit art,
Who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart":—

and these—"Come Holy Ghost, Eternal God," &c.; "Word from the Sire, supernal," &c.; "A Babe in Bethlehem is born," &c.; "Lo!

her heart with anguish rending," &c., &c. But we heartily commend the book for adoption by the churches for whose use it is intended. Let new congregations pause, nor hastily adopt another ere they have seen this. Many who have used others might find it desirable to throw them aside in its favour. Once adopted, we know, by experience, it will weekly grow in the affections of the worshippers. It is published in several convenient forms, and at prices as convenient.

MEMOIRS OF JAMES HUTTON, comprising the Annals of His Life, and Connexion with the United Brethren. By DANIEL BENHAM. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

THE subject of this Memoir must not be confounded with the Edinburgh geologist. This James Hutton was a distinguished member of the English Moravians, was born in London, in 1715, and died in 1795. He was the son of a non-juring clergyman, but became connected with the Wesleys, and afterwards joined the Moravians. Those who are desirous of making a closer acquaintance with this ancient and interesting body, will find that this life of Hutton throws much light on their spirit, their methods, and their doings, during an important period of their history. The literary pretensions of the volume are but small, nor is there much of that attention to system which is usual in biographies for the ease of the reader; but there is much interesting information, and there are many curious documents.

SAVING TRUTHS. By the Rev. JOHN CUMMING, D.D., F.R.S.E. London: John Farquhar Shaw.

THE BODY, MIND, AND SPIRIT; or, the Life of Nature, of Reason, and of Heaven, separately Traced in Man. London: H. J. McClary.

THE name of Dr. Cumming, the Dumas of "religious" literature, is on the title-page of the first of these books. Whatever else this may not ensure, it ensures a sale.

The young and clever author of the second tract has been drinking at the Swedenborgian spring. We advise those to read it who are fond of queer physics, queer metaphysics, and queer theology, assuring them that it will reward their diligence. We must caution them against the theory of combustion, on page 18; and likewise warn them that the information is not always to be trusted; as, for instance, when, at p. 14, La Place's celebrated theory of the origination of the planets from the solar atmosphere, is fathered on Humboldt.

USE AND ABUSE; or, Right and Wrong, in the Relations to Labour, Capital, Machinery, and Land. By WILLIAM M'COMBIE. London: Ward and Co.

POLITICAL Economy might more justly be said to be a branch of mixed mathematics than of ethics. It is not so much with the science, as with the actions which are the subject of the science, that right and wrong come into contact. But with regard to the latter, ethics cannot be ignored without peril; nay, without certain and tremendous calamity. Any one, therefore, who, with a clear head and an earnest heart, addresses the public ear on the vital question of the ethical relations of political economy, deserves welcome, honour, and careful attention. Such a man is the author of the two lectures which constitute this little volume. He is well acquainted with the facts of his complicated subject; and, which is of more importance, has laboured long and well to perceive their relations, and to dispose them into their proper groups. We cordially recommend the book.

ESSAYS ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUPERIOR POPULAR LITERATURE. By WILLIAM BATHGATE. London: Ward and Co.

LONGINUS wrote a treatise on the sublime,

And was himself the great sublime he drew.

Mr. Bathgate has written on a superior popular literature, and has himself furnished a very fair specimen of the same. We think, however, that his style would be improved by a greater degree of transparency, so as to render the meaning obvious. This is a "fast" age. Men do not love trouble without proportionable remuneration. They think they have a right to ask not to be called upon to dig, except for treasure. Hence this critical canon:—An author's right to obscurity is in direct proportion to the richness of his thoughts. Nuggets may lie deep, but potatoes ought to be near the surface. Not that Mr. Bathgate is either an obscure writer or a poor thinker; but if a man declines the service even of that obscurity, to which, according to the above canon, he is entitled by the value of his thoughts, so much the greater his merit, and the reader's gratitude.

LADIES OF THE REFORMATION, &c. Second Series. By the Rev. JAMES ANDERSON. London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and New York: Blackie and Son.—As the author of this work has already made himself favourably known to the public by service of a similar character; particularly by "Ladies of the Covenant," he the less needs praise and commendation

now. The present volume is healthy in spirit, interesting in matter and manner, elegant in form, and adorned with excellent wood-cuts.—**ETCHINGS AND PEARLS:** or, a Flower from the Root of Memory, Planted by the Hand of Friendship on the Grave of Emma Tatham. By MARY ANN WESTBROOK. London: Judd and Glass.—An elegant monument raised by feminine hands to one of the same sex, the early blossoms of whose genius are tenderly shown us, bedewed with tears.—**THE DIVINE LIFE:** A Book of Facts and Histories. By the Rev. JOHN KENNEDY, M.A., F.R.G.S. London: The Religious Tract Society.—THE vigorous Stepney pastor has produced a volume, happy both in idea and execution, and worthy the attention of the philosopher and the Christian. It illustrates the life of godliness in man in the best way; to wit, by the most notable examples. These various types are well described and discriminated, and we see in them spiritual vitality arising and manifesting itself in many different modes, yet in all its varieties preserving its essential qualities. Such a treatment of the subject is as far superior to the most able abstractions as an account of any province of the physical universe by an able and enthusiastic observer and historian would be to the most ingenious speculations of a philosopher who had never been brought into actual contact with the phenomena.—**CHERRY AND VIOLET:** A Tale of the Great Plague. By the Author of "Mary Powell." London: Arthur Hall, Virtue, and Co.—A NICE little story, but somewhat wanting in power. It is one of those which, not content with being historical, assumes to have been written in the age in which the scenes are laid: and the illusion in this case is aided by the phrase of the time, and the old typography. The scene is laid in the times of the Commonwealth and the Restoration. The author's sympathies are on the side of the Cavaliers, and the spirit of the book is churchly. We hope that good Master Blower was a better Greek scholar than appears through the—possibly refracting—feminine medium.—**DISCOURSES.** By JAMES FRAME. London: Ward and Co. Glasgow: Lang, Adamson, and Co.—These are dedicated to "the members of the Evangelical Union Church, Dumferline." There are nine of them. They are on vital questions of Christianity, and are the earnest words of a vigorous and conscientious thinker. Although not able to subscribe to all which they contain, we like them much. The third, whose title is "The Tears of Jesus an Index to the Heart of the Godhead," is a gem. Mr. Frame has been emancipated from much scholastic dogma. We should like to see the emancipation complete, and the teachings of the Bible on *all* the questions he treats of given in simple words, irrespectively of all barbarous theologizings.—**PARTING COUNSELS:** An Exposition of the First Chapter of the Second Epistle of the Apostle Peter, with Four Additional Discourses. By JOHN BROWN, D.D. Edinburgh:

Oliphant and Sons. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.—THE author of this volume has honourably served the Presbyterian Church of his country for fifty years. The [exposition is elaborate and useful, and the concluding sermons are solid and edifying. Although the volume savours somewhat more of Scottish dogmatism than is quite agreeable to our Southern taste, yet it is a fitting memorial of the most worthy author.—THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKSPERE AND THE EARL OF SURREY. With Memoirs, Critical Dissertations, and Explanatory Notes. By the Rev. GEORGE GILFILLAN. Edinburgh: Nichol. London: Nisbet and Co.—Mr. Gilfillan's series of "The British Poets" needs no recommendation. The public are already well acquainted with its characteristics, and will doubtless continue their patronage. Without pronouncing it to be the best series of the kind, we may safely say that it is the cheapest, and that it is distinguished by the liveliness of its biographical and critical introductions, bold type, and excellent paper, in octavo size. These last are no mean recommendation in this day of cheap shabbiness. The present volume contains Shakspeare's sonnets, and the poems of the gifted and unfortunate Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey.—GOODWON, AND OTHER POEMS. By ALEXANDER DEWAR. Second Edition. London: Partridge and Co.—If this volume will not entitle the author to rank among poets, it deserves respect for its healthy spirit of purity and independence, and for the honest purpose of persuading its readers, especially the clerical, to abstain altogether from alcoholic drink.—ECLECTIC REVIEW. New series. January, 1857. London: Ward and Co.—THIS venerable Review shows unmistakeable marks of renewed life. Unlike its philosophical namesake, it has an individual character, and a reason for existence. There is a very decided improvement under the new management. New and better blood circulates. If this goes on, we shall see the anomaly of a monthly equal to the quarterlies. And why not? During the past year, articles have appeared of real and permanent value, which would have stamped a good character on periodicals of greater size and pretension. In the present number, "The Neufchatel Question"—"Reynard the Fox"—and "Dove's Logic of the Christian Faith," are markworthy on their respective subjects.—CHILDREN AT CHURCH: being Six Simple Sermons, by J. L. ERSKINE CLARKE, M.A. Derby: R. Keene. London: Partridge. Lichfield: Lomax. 1857.—THIS is a little gem. It is exquisitely fitted to its end:—judicious, tender, fascinating. It presents great truths in forms that charm, enlighten, and impress children. Perhaps it may indicate the merits of this little work for children, to say, Our youngest child that can read has read it through, word by word, with the greatest interest.



A HOMILY

ON

What Hinders the Gospel? The Question Answered.

“And the Lord was with Judah; and he drave out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron.”—Judges i. 19.

“Who told the truth in unrighteousness.”—Rom. i. 18.

LAST May we mooted the question, “What hinders the Gospel?”* The fact that it is manifestly designed and fitted for universal diffusion—that all men, on all zones and in all periods, urgently require it; that, for eighteen hundred years, it has been here in its completed state; that notwithstanding this, scarcely an eighth part of the human population has as yet ever heard of its existence—and it is to be feared that not an eighth part of that eighth have experienced its saving power—continues to press this question upon our spirit with increasing force and solemnity.

In my previous homily upon this question I endeavoured to show what the obstruction of the Gospel *could not* be referred to;—that it was not to be traced to the sovereignty of God, nor to its restricted necessity or fitness; nor to the depravity of the heathen world; nor to the supposition that Christianity is preliminary to the advent of another system, which is to supersede it, and do that which it has failed to

* See *Homilist*, vol. v., p. 155.

accomplish ; nor even to the want of money, for which all churches are constantly importuning. What, then, is the hindrance ? I can find the chief, if not the whole, obstruction in one word—MAL-REPRESENTATION : a holding of “the truth of God in unrighteousness.”

Infinite Intelligence has a plan by which He does all things. He never works by impulse or caprice. The first verse at the head of this homily contains two general truths concerning the procedure of God—truths which are well suited to guide us in our present enquiry. First : *That the great God frequently makes human agency the condition of His own action.* It is with Him a fixed purpose to accomplish certain objects in connexion with man’s activity. His plan now was to “drive out the inhabitants of the valley,” through the well-directed agency of the Israelites. Secondly : *So entirely does the Almighty abide by this plan, that if the required human agency is not put forth, He will not work.* The language before us implies that there is an impossibility for Him to work without attention on man’s part to this arrangement. It is said that God “*could not* drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they”—the inhabitants of the mountains—“had chariots of iron.” Were the chariots of iron too strong for Almighty God ? He could have shattered them and the mountains around them by a simple volition. But these “chariots of iron” so discouraged and terrified the Israelites that they would not do the part which God designed them to do ; and because God would not violate His own plan, He “*could not*” drive them out. God’s plan is the best, and He cannot deviate from the best. Now, the plan by which He promotes the circulation of the Gospel amongst men is most clearly revealed in the Bible ; and it is this—*A proper human representation of it.* The Divine idea is to be reflected on man through man. Good men are the orbs which He holds in His right hand, in order to reflect the sun-rays of His redemptive love upon the world. This treasure He has “put in earthen vessels.” The God-man brought the Gospel idea into the world at the first. Human

nature, in the life of Jesus, gave a true expression of it to the race. Christ, before He left this world, entrusted its representation to His disciples, and charged them to be faithful. Had they not manifested it, the world would have lost it; or had they *misrepresented* it, the world would have suffered by it. But they gave a true expression of it, and thousands felt its life-giving and transforming power. The disciples, in their turn, before they left the world, charged their successors, "in the sight of God," to commit "to faithful men," who would be able to teach others also, "the things which they heard of them." Thus through man the Gospel came into the world at first, and through man it has ever since been sustained; and this is manifestly the plan of God for its propagation.

Why the great Author of the Gospel should proceed on such a plan—should leave the promotion of the Gospel to depend upon man's representation of it—is a question which, if proper, it is not necessary to determine. We may as well ask why He has left the life of the world, vegetable and animal, to depend upon the solar beams and the fertile showers, and a hundred other such questions, as to ask why He has left the spread of the Gospel to depend upon such a contingency. It is enough for me to know, as the reasons of his procedure in any case, that as His nature is LOVE, the ultimate reason of every act is some benevolent idea. Love is the planning genius of the universe: it frames and fashions all. It is the contriver of all Divine contrivances—the inventive faculty of God. Nor is it difficult to see love in the plan in question. What an honor does it confer on human nature to make it the reflector and exponent of Divine ideas! What benign power, too, is there in the arrangements to stimulate the devout to benevolent effort, and to unite the human family in the bonds of gratitude and compassion! Those to whom the Gospel is entrusted for representation, will ever be induced to look upon their species with the kindest sympathies; and those whom they benefit will regard them with thankfulness and love;—

and thus social harmony will be promoted, and the source of human happiness increased.

Three general remarks may suffice to show that there has been sufficient *mal*-representation to account for its present limited influence.

I. THAT THE GOSPEL REGARDS THE CEREMONIAL AS SUBORDINATE TO THE DOCTRINAL. If this is so, a mere *ritualistic* manifestation of it is a *mal*-representation. Though the Old Testament had many rites, the New has only two—baptism and the Lord's Supper. But the rites of both the Old and New were intended to answer the same functions in the economy of revelation ; namely, to adumbrate doctrines. This is evident from three considerations. First : That the great design of the Bible is to improve the moral character of man. In the language of the Old Testament, it is to take away "the heart of stone, and to give a heart of flesh" ; and in the language of the New, it is "to create him anew in Christ Jesus, unto good works." It is to direct the sympathies into new channels, the will to new purposes, the faculties to new engagements ; to inspire the whole soul with a new life, and turn its every sentiment and energy God-ward. Secondly : In the nature of the case, this can only be accomplished by the presentation to the mind of reformatory ideas—ideas adapted to effect the desired change. No priestly manipulations, no sacerdotal services, no incantation,—nothing apart from *ideas* can effect a change in man's moral character. All reformations grow out of thoughts. He who changes his conduct without being able to assign a reason, acts contrary to his rational nature. "Whatsoever is not of faith is of sin,"—sin against our make as men. Ideas are our rudders. As the soul glides along the warm and swelling sea of feeling, it can only be turned to new points of the moral compass by them. Thirdly : That the rites of revelation are exquisitely fitted to convey reformatory ideas. All the purifications and sacrifices under the law, as well as the two "ordinances,"

as they are called in the Gospel, are a kind of pictorial, and therefore popularly impressive, representation of two great reformatory doctrines ;—namely, that man's nature is so thoroughly corrupt as to require the application of an extraneous agency, in order to renovate it ; and his sinfulness against his Maker is so heinous as to require the death of another for its expiation. The ritualism of the Bible—which, in its first period, was multiform and gorgeous—is like a series of pictures : some highly elaborated, and some more sketchy ; but the subjects of them all are too palpable to be mistaken ;—they are these reformatory doctrines. Every stroke and shade are designed to bring them out in their bold and majestic proportions.

If, then, the ceremonies of the Bible are nothing but the *symbols* of its doctrines, a ritualistic or a *sensuous* manifestation of the Gospel is a *mal*-representation. By a ritualistic manifestation, I mean the representing of ceremonies as doing that which doctrines cannot accomplish ; representing them not as vehicles through which to convey Divine thoughts, but as vehicles through which to convey some *mystic grace*. I mean the exalting of ceremonies above truths ; attaching more importance to the form than the substance, the painting than the subject, the means than the end. I mean the appealing more to the sensuous than to the spiritual part of human nature ; lodging religion in the eye and the ear, rather than in the heart ; ministering to the senses rather than the soul.

But has such mal-representation of the Gospel ever been made as this ? Ask history. For nine long centuries this was almost the only representation the Gospel had in Europe. Rites were multiplied and magnified until almost every ray of doctrinal truth was obscured. Mediæval times are called the “dark ages ;”—and properly so, for the cloud of ceremonies became too dense for the pure light of Christianity to penetrate. Nor did the Reformation terminate this state of things : it only swept, as it were, one little cloud from the religious sky of Europe. In the Roman Church and the Greek

Church, and the Tractarian Church, how much ritualism have you still in connexion with Christianity!—and in the realm of ritualism “the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not.” Under its sable shadows the “light of life” is hid.

II. THAT THE GOSPEL REGARDS THE DOCTRINAL AS SUBSERVIENT TO THE ETHICAL. And if this is so, a mere *theological* manifestation is a mal-representation. Christianity consists mainly of two elements—*doctrines* and *precepts*; subjects for faith and rules for life—theology and morality. In instituting a comparison between these two elements, I would not be understood as intending to depreciate the importance of true doctrine. I believe that true doctrine is vital to all true morality. Doctrines and precepts are rays from the same eternal sun of truth;—the former, however, throwing their radiance upwards—revealing the vast heavens that encircle us, and impressing us with ideas of infinitude; the latter flowing down upon our earthly path, and guiding our feet in the way of life. Of what use would the sun be to us if all its rays streamed upwards, unfolding the boundless blue, and none reached our earthly sphere, to show us how to act? The theology of the Bible is useless to a man unless it changes his heart, and moulds his life anew.

Now, that the doctrinal is truly subservient to the ethical, is obvious from the following considerations. First: From the teachings of the New Testament. Christ’s preaching was pre-eminently practical. In His sermon upon the mount, which may be regarded as a specimen of His teaching, how does the ethical element predominate over the doctrinal? The apostles, in this respect, closely followed the example of their Master. Paul is the only one who seems to give himself to doctrinal discussion to any great extent, but even he is ever careful to make his doctrines bear on practical life. He exhorts Timothy to the “holding of faith, and a good conscience.” He would not have doctrines merely intellectually held, but held always with “a good

conscience." He looked upon doctrines as a means to originate and "maintain good works." Secondly: From the relation of Christian doctrines to the springs of human life. There are doctrines in science, like mathematical axioms, that have little or no relation to human feelings and impulses, the springs of human conduct. Your belief of them makes no impression upon the heart; they have no power to exert any influence on your every-day life. Not so with doctrines of the Gospel;—they have a relation to every sentiment of your spiritual nature. The doctrines concerning God, and Christ, and man, touch you at every point. The sense of advantage, the sense of right, the sense of God, the sense of an after-life, are the mightiest impulses of the soul; and upon all of these do the doctrines of the Gospel bear. They are heart-chorus, which doctrines can either set to music or wake to thunder. Thirdly: From the fact that doctrines are useless to the man unless they do promote a holy life. Let a man be thoroughly acquainted with every part of the Bible, let him understand every principle in its relation to the whole circle of truth, let his theology be as correct and comprehensive as that of the highest angel-student in the universe,—yet if his life remains unreformed and unsanctified by his knowledge, his theological attainments would only swell his responsibility, and aggravate his misery at last. Fourthly: From the declarations of the Bible. The Bible teaches that it is not he who "heareth" the word that shall be saved, but he that "doeth it"; that it is not a "hearer of the word that is blessed, but a doer of the work." Fifthly: From the fact that even the doctrinal cannot be fully understood without the practice of the ethical. "He that doeth the will," said Christ, "shall know of the doctrine"; and John declares, that "he that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." The doctrines of Christ are not learnt like the doctrines of Newton or Euclid, by mere intellectual study; they are learnt by the heart and the life. Action alone translates Christian doctrines into meaning.

Now, if the doctrinal is subservient to the moral, then a *mere theological manifestation of the Gospel is a mal-representation*. By a *mere theological manifestation*, I mean a manifestation where the theological has been exalted above the ethical—the theory above the practice ; where Christianity has been made a metaphysical minister to the brain, rather than a loving prompter to the heart, and guide to the life ; where the creed has been exalted above the code ; “the letter that killeth,” above “the spirit that giveth life.”

Has the Gospel ever been so represented ? Has it not generally been so, especially in Protestant ages ? In Papal times its representation was *ceremonial* rather than *doctrinal*, but now, under Protestantism, it is more doctrinal than anything else. From the Protestant Church some human creed is held forth as representing Christianity. That creed is often contended for with a polemical animus that not only conceals, but violates, the benign genius of the Gospel ; that creed is often brought under men’s attention in a way repulsive to every dictate of common sense, and to every generous impulse of the heart ; that creed is often forced on men’s consciences in violation of every principle of honor and justice. The Church has been commanded “to hold forth the word of life”—the spirit and provisions of the Gospel ; but instead of that, it has been holding forth the crude and cloudy abstractions of men. A human creed can no more represent the Gospel than a smoking lamp can represent the great orb that rules the day, and kindles up the stars of night.

III. THAT THE GOSPEL REGARDS THE TRUE ETHICAL AS EMBODIED IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST. And if this is so, a mere dry *legal* manifestation of it is a mal-representation. Where are the ethical elements whose illustration, enforcement, and promotion, all doctrines are to subserve, to be found ? Are they to be found in the statutes of governments, the rubrics of churches, or the practices of religious sects ? No ! Men have often made sound doctrine subservient to the corrupt ethics drawn from such sources ; but the ethics

to which all sound theology should ever minister are embodied in the life of the *one* Being—CHRIST. He is not only the Decalogue, but the whole of Heaven's code. All the eternal principles of moral law and order He reduced to life—He translated into human actions. "He fulfilled all righteousness." Our whole duty is summed up in His command, "Follow me." Assimilation to Christ is the perfection of man.

From this it follows, that every manifestation of the Gospel not thoroughly in keeping with the *spirit* and *life* of Jesus is a mal-representation. Whatever in the Church gives the world a wrong idea of *Him* misrepresents the Gospel. And how much has there ever been, and still is, which is thoroughly inconsistent with His ever-blessed life. All *lordliness* in the Church misrepresents the Gospel: for Christ "made Himself of no reputation, took on Him the form of a servant," was "meek and lowly in heart," identified Himself with the poorest of the poor, and became the Minister of all. O ye presumptuous mortals, who live in luxury, display the gorgeous, and sit as lords over God's heritage! you are systematically misrepresenting the profoundly humble and self-denying spirit of Him "who went about doing good," and who, when exhausted, had no place whereon to lay His weary head. Everything like *severity* in the Church misrepresents the Gospel; for it is opposed to the Spirit of Him who did not cause His "voice to be heard in the street"; and who would not "break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." And what severity has the Church displayed! How has it dealt with its heretics? How has it sanctioned war,—the greatest curse to the race; the greatest antagonist to the spirit of Him who gave His life for His enemies? Have not the men who, with an astounding hardihood, profess to be the ministers of the Gospel of peace, been generally found amongst the most effective advocates of war? It would seem as if the world itself could not dare to engage in the demon work without the sanction of those who profess to know the will of Heaven. Ministers must consecrate its banners, and

make their prayers on its behalf, to nerve its quailing heart. Everything like *sectarian narrowness* in the Church misrepresents the Gospel ; for it is opposed to the spirit of Him who, with the outstretched arms of a world-wide love, invites "the weary and the heavy laden" to Him for rest. His sympathies, like the heavens, encircle all lands, and smile on all peoples. *Formality* in the Church of Christ misrepresents the Gospel ; for it is opposed to the spirit of Him who taught that "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." In Christ, religion was a life, not an office ; worship the habit of a devout mind in all places, not a service in any specific locality or building.

Another train of thought has just occurred to us, which may further serve to illustrate the various forms of the mal-representation, and to sum up our observations upon this truly momentous theme. We can only briefly indicate the most salient points.

First : The ceremonies of the Gospel being only intended as the symbols of its doctrines, a mere *ritualistic* ministry of it is a mal-representation. Having touched on this point before, the mention of it here must suffice.

Secondly : The doctrines of the Gospel being coincident with human reason, any *irrational* manifestation of it is a mal-representation. There are truths which relatively transcend finite reason, and there are truths which absolutely transcend finite reason ;—that is, there are truths which at one period tower above the vision of a finite intellect, which at another period come thoroughly within its sweep ; and there are truths undoubtedly pertaining to Infinite Being, that *must* always continue beyond the reach of creature-faculties. But there are no truths repugnant to the fundamental principles of reason. The supposition implies a contradiction. When, therefore, doctrines are proclaimed as Christian doctrines, which clash with the laws of our rational nature, you have a gross misrepresentation of Christianity. When eternal reprobation is preached ; when the death of Christ is

represented as quenching the flaming ire, and awakening the mercy, of God ; when baptism is preached as a regenerating power, and bread and wine are declared to be transmuted into the body of the Lord ; when priestly absolution and apostolic succession are set forth as tenets of the Christian faith,—you have dogmas against which reason revolts. An irrational ministry, which is a misrepresentation of Christianity, has, alas ! been too popular in every age ; and it has acted as a repellant to all whose rational faculties are at all developed, or in a healthy state.

Thirdly : The meaning of the Gospel being only truly reached by experience, a mere *professional* manifestation of it is a mal-representation. Christianity is only thoroughly understood by the heart. Lydia's heart "was opened" in order to understand the things spoken by St. Paul. Its doctrines must be transmuted into feelings to be thoroughly understood. The "little book" must be eaten—the system must be tried—to be known. Intellect is not the only knowing faculty either in the lowest or the highest department of being. The knowledge of sizes and forms and colors, of odours and sounds, came not to us through reason ; it was the sensuous faculty that conveyed them to our consciousness. Nor does the knowledge of God, and light, and love, come to us through the understanding ; it is the spiritual faculty—the moral heart—that mirrors them to the soul. Could the intellect, with its utmost efforts, give us the conception of the flavor of a fruit we had never tasted, or of a color we had never seen, or of sounds that had never fallen on our ear ? Impossible ! No more could it give us the idea of rectitude had we never felt its sentiment, or love had we never felt its flame. Sentiment alone can comprehend sentiment ;—the things of the heart can alone be understood by the heart. Who knows "the things of the spirit" but the Spirit ? The Gospel is a revelation of the heart—the heart of God—and the heart alone can understand it. In relation to the Gospel, the more we love, the more we know. He, therefore, who merely dispenses its

truths to men in a professional way, however lucidly he may expound or eloquently enforce them, must fail to give a truthful view. There is an artificial air which misrepresents the Gospel. The heart must speak to the heart about the things of the heart. A mere *functional* ministry of the Gospel is a mal-representation.

Fourthly : The genius of the Gospel being that of benevolence, any *unloving* manifestation of it is a mal-representation. The Gospel is a history of Divine love. Its one great central truth is, that "God is love"; and that He loves man though a sinner. All the parts of the Bible are but illustrations, in some form or other, of His love—rays from this as the central point. The Gospel is love,—Divine love incarnate, reasoning, toiling, praying, and suffering for man. The severe aspects of God in the Bible are only to His love what the shadows are to the sun. Shadows imply that the sun is still shining on, but some object obstructs its benignant rays. It is human sin that obstructs, at times, the bright rays of Divine love, and flings the shadow of apparent anger on our path ; but Divine love still shines behind the obstructive object, and lights up the universe with bliss. If the Gospel is thus full of love, any cold or unkind manifestation of it is a mal-representation. Does the Church represent *love* ? warm, self denying, world-wide love ? If not, it does not represent the Gospel.

Fifthly : The provisions of the Gospel being for universal man, any *restricted* offer of them is a mal-representation. I find nothing restricted in the provisions of the Gospel. They are for the world, not for a class. Are the provisions represented as light ? It is the light of the world. Are they represented as fruit ? It is the fruit of a tree whose leaves are for the healing of nations. Are they spoken of as refreshing waters ? They are for "every one that thirsteth." It offers liberty to every slave, pardon to every sinner, and a happy immortality to every dying man. Its blessings are for WHOSOEVER will partake of them. Let the narrow-minded bigot preach that the sun was lit up for a class ; or that

the ocean was poured forth for a class ; or that the sea of air, whose every wave is life, rolls through the world for a class ; and his sermons will be as true to nature as those sermons are to the Gospel, that proclaim that God's mercy is only for a "favorite few." Such preaching is a mal-representation of the Gospel.

Who does not see, from these brief suggestions, that the Gospel has such a mal-representation as to account for its present limited and feeble influence in the world ? Indeed, when I think that the *proper human representation* of the Gospel is God's chosen method for promoting its transforming influence through the world, and remember the gross misrepresentations it has ever received, and is still receiving, my wonder is not that its influence is so circumscribed, but that it should have any influence at all. The Church has caricatured the Gospel. It has concealed the living, loving Christ—the Friend, Brother, and Saviour of universal man—under the repulsive forms of ceremonies, polemics, assumptions, severities, sectarianisms and formalities.

You need not pry, my brothers, into the decrees of Heaven, in order to find out the cause of the miserably limited influence of the Gospel in the world. In the word MAL-REPRESENTATION you have the obstruction rising, in a thousand forms, palpably before you. I do not wonder at Voltaire, and his infidel contemporaries, who figured in the French Revolution, judging of Christianity—as they foolishly did—as it appeared in the Papal Church, hating it, and determining to throw it off as a foul incubus upon the heart of their nation. I do not wonder that men, in our own day and country, who only judge of Christianity as it is represented in some churches, rising up in hostility against it ; still less do I wonder that the millions stand aloof from it as a thing of little or no interest to them. Ecclesiastical Christianity is too much a burlesque upon the Christianity of Christ. For the same reason that, of old, God "could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley," He cannot now convert the world, because there is the want of the

conditioned agency—a proper human representation of His blessed Gospel.

My conclusion is, that the first thing to be done, in order to convert the world, is to reform the Church. You may have your missionary societies, you may send forth your emissaries, you may stud the globe with your missionary stations : but unless the Church will give the Christianity of Christ, in His own spirit of love, it will be labor lost. The world will not have the Christianity of your little sects and conventional ministries, and notional polemics. You have tried it long enough. Amend your ways!—give it “the truth as it is in Jesus.”

Oh ! come the day, when the living, personal Christ, with a Brother’s warm heart, overflowing with love, and a Father’s kindly sentiments of affection streaming from his lips—He who, of old, trod the hills of Capernaum and the shores of Galilee, the “Friend of sinners”—shall appear again in His Church ;—the Spirit of every act, the meaning of every service, the Sovereign of every heart !

The Genius of the Gospel.

ABLE expositions of the Gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers ; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its *widest* truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach ; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archaeological, geographic, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim ; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

THIRTIETH SECTION.—*Matt. xi. 1—15.*

SUBJECT :—*John the Baptist ; or, Phases of Moral Worth.*

THE reader who desires a verbal criticism of these verses, clause by clause, must look elsewhere. Our object is to give their most salient moral lessons, which are, for the

most part, independent of any such literary operation. Our work with the mere *words* will be to make them give prominence and effect to what appears to us the great lessons they are intended to teach.

We discover three facts here in relation to moral worth:—

I. THAT MORAL WORTH, EVEN IN ITS MORE ADVANCED STAGES, IS OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH MUCH THAT IS PROFOUNDLY TRYING.

First : *The passage teaches us that John was now in prison.* “Now when John had heard in the prison,” &c. (Ver. 2.) The cause and issue of his imprisonment you have stated in Matthew xiv. 3—12 ; Mark vi. 17—29. He was there not because he had transgressed any law, human or divine, but because—from fidelity to his age, his conscience, and his God—he reproved Herod for his immoral and licentious conduct.

Secondly : *The passage teaches that, though John was in prison, he was a man of advanced moral worth.* Did John deserve this incarceration ! What was his character ? He who trieth the reins, weigheth the actions, and knoweth what is in man, gives, in the passage under review, a striking and satisfactory answer to this question. (Verses 7—14. He teaches that John was a man of *distinguished* excellence ; distinguished in three respects :—(1.) In his *moral attributes*. “And as they departed”—as the “two disciples” whom John had despatched were returning to their master with the answer of Christ—“Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see ? A reed shaken with the wind ? But what went ye out for to see ? A man clothed in soft raiment ?” &c. As if the heavenly Teacher had said, Don’t suppose that, because John has sent this message to me about my Messiahship, he is fickle and inconstant ; that the man you saw in the wilderness is “a reed shaken with the wind.” No ! he is a man of *moral stability*. He is not one of your temporizing men, who bow to outward circumstances, as the frail reed on

the Jordan to the gusts of heaven. Though the crowds that went forth to the wilderness to be baptized of him had no deep-rooted faith—were inconstant and shifting as the winds—he stood as firm in his faith as the everlasting mountains, whose cooling shadows screened him from the scorching sun. Neither suppose from his message, which you have heard his disciples deliver me, that he is one of those effeminate souls that cannot endure trials for truth's sake. He is not one of those men who study luxury and ease, and desire to be “clothed in soft raiment.” You will find such empty fawning men in kings' houses ; but such is not John. Wrapped in his camel's hair, and incarcerated in his dungeon, he is greater than Herod in his gorgeous robes and magnificent palace. The language of Christ implies that John had reached that stage in moral excellence which made him superior to external circumstances ; that a vacillating age could not turn him from his purpose ; that a prison could not conquer his soul ; that the gaieties and pleasures of the world had no charms for him. Christ refers (2.) to his *spiritual function*. “But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist : notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.” The idea is, that John sustained an office in the kingdom of redemptive truth, although inferior to the office sustained by those under the Gospel dispensation, superior to all the ancient prophets. He was the *forerunner* of Christ ;—like the heralds of ancient kings, he prepared His way. He was the *introducer* of Christ. On the banks of the Jordan, when the Messiah first appeared, he pointed the multitudes to Him, and said, “Behold the Lamb of God.” He occupied a point in the history of divine revelation which no other man ever did. Those who preceded him saw the moon of Judaism, but not the sun of

Christianity. Others who succeeded saw the sun of Christianity, but not the moon;—the moon had gone down. But John lived just in that hour when the two bodies appeared in the heavens at the same time. He saw the moon of Judaism sinking beneath the horizon, never to rise again; and the sun of Christianity rolling up the East, to fill the heavens so long as men shall be on the earth. He was the *baptizer* of Christ. Such was the office of John—"the Elias, which was to come." Christ refers (3.) to his *religious usefulness*. "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Since the days that John began to preach—since he began to call the world to repentance—there has been a rush into the kingdom of truth. Men, roused from their spiritual slumbers—startled by a sense of their sin and ruin—have earnestly applied for pardon and salvation. The echo of the words he proclaimed on the Jordan still lingers and rings in the souls of men, and the result is a pressing every day into the empire of redemptive truth.

Such is the view which Christ gives of John. He cannot speak either ignorantly or flatteringly of his character. John, therefore, was a man of signal excellence—a "burning and a shining light." But notwithstanding this, he was now in prison. Great excellences here do not exclude us from trial. Tribulation is the lot of the good. Prisons have often been the home of virtue. Some of the noblest characters that ever appeared amongst men have been consigned to chains and dungeons by their contemporaries: Joseph, Jeremiah, the apostles—Jesus Himself. "In the world," said Christ, "ye shall have tribulation. Be of good courage; I have overcome the world."

II. THAT THE TRIALS WITH WHICH IT IS ASSOCIATED ARE FREQUENTLY SUGGESTIVE OF SPIRITUAL DIFFICULTY. John, in prison, sent two of his disciples to Christ, to put the question directly to Him as to whether He was the Messiah or not. "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for

another?" Three different reasons are suggested for inducing John to send his disciples with this message to Jesus. First: That he did so for the sake of his disciples. It is supposed that some of their number were not satisfied that He was the true Messiah, and that he sent two of the doubters directly to Christ himself, in order to have the difficulties removed. Secondly: That it was on account of John's own personal misgivings. His imprisonment and trials, it is supposed, had tended, in some measure, to raise the question in his own mind as to whether He was the true Messiah or not. Even on this hypothesis, the question implies that his faith in the existence of *a* Messiah, and in the obligation of man to look out for Him, remained unshaken. The only point on which he wanted satisfaction was, Was He *the* Messiah? How, in reply to this supposition, it is asked, could a man like John, who had been previously privileged with such visions and experiences of Christ's Messiahship, have a moment's question on the point? He who knows much of human nature—who has marked its tendency, in most cases, to reactions, and especially in such cases as John's, where the emotional element predominates, and is capable of tremendous excitement—will not see much difficulty here. Still less will he who understands much of Christian experience discover any great improbability in a good man, with a strong emotional tide constantly flowing through his nature, falling, under great trials, into doubts, even after the highest experiences of Christian certitude and joy. "In the life of every believer," says Olshausen, "are to be found moments of temptation, in which even the most firm conviction will be shaken to its very foundation. Nothing is more natural than to conceive such moments or periods of internal darkness and abandonment by the Spirit of God, even in the life of St. John." In his gloomy prison, at Machaerus, a dark hour, no doubt, surprised the man of God,—an hour in which he was struck with the quiet, unobtrusive ministry of Christ, and wherein he fell into internal conflict concerning the experiences he

heretofore had. It was natural for his circumstances to start those doubts. In his cold and dreary prison he might have reasoned thus with himself :—I am sent as a messenger to prepare the way of the true Messiah. I saw, I baptized, a Personage who professed to be the true Messiah ; but can it be so ? If it be He, why does He allow me to pine away in this miserable dungeon ? The other reason assigned for the question is, Thirdly : That John sends the disciples as a deputation to Christ, not on account of any doubts that either he or his followers entertained, but in order to stimulate Jesus to greater haste in the carrying out of his plans. Christ was acting too unostentatiously and quietly to suit the enthusiastic nature and hopes of John, and he was anxious for a grand manifestation at once.

Whichever supposition is the correct one,* you have the trials associated with moral worth starting difficulties to the mind. The trials of virtue have, in every age, perplexed the judgment of the godly. (1.) Why, under the government of a wise, just, and merciful God, should the virtuous be impoverished, imprisoned, and sometimes martyred, by the wicked and corrupt, as was now the case with John ? (2.) Why should the true and the right be so slow in their progress, as they appeared now, probably, to John in the history of Christ ?

III. THAT THESE DIFFICULTIES CAN BE EFFECTUALLY REMOVED BY AN EARNEST APPLICATION TO CHRIST. “Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see : the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.” Observe—

First : *Christ meets the difficulty not by logical reasoning, but by palpable facts.* He does not take John’s disciples into the

* Let those who wish to go into the polemics of the question read Stier, *in loco*.

realm of theological thought, and there gather up considerations, in order to satisfy. No! He points them to what they could *see* and *hear*—to *facts*. The history of what Christianity has done is the best evidence of its truth. Point the infidel to what it has achieved!

Secondly : *The facts by which Christ meets the difficulty are most demonstrative.* (1.) They are *supernatural in their character*. “The blind receive their sight,” &c. No one but the true Messiah could do those works. (2.) They are *merciful in their genius*. Mere supernatural work would of itself be no evidence. If the work was *malevolent*, it would be so contrary to the consciousness of man that “God is love”; that, though supernatural, it *could not* be received as Divine. But the supernatural agency in Christianity is wielded for benevolent purposes. It is not striking men with blindness or deafness, &c. All is mercy. (3.) They are *spiritual in their aim*. “The poor have the gospel preached to them,” &c. If the *benevolent miracle* was merely for the good of the body, and had no reference to the good of the soul, which is the offspring of God, one might have some difficulty in cordially receiving it as divine. But Christianity has *miraculous* facts—miraculous facts essentially benevolent in character—and their benevolence aiming mainly at the good of the soul.

Thirdly : *Those that are satisfied with the demonstration of His Messiahship are blessed.* “Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.” The question of John’s disciples implied a kind of “offence”—a difficulty of thoroughly believing in Christ’s Messiahship—somewhere, either with John or his disciples; and therefore Christ says, “Blessed is he that is not offended in me.” As if He had said, I know that there is a danger in the corrupt heart to be offended with me. My poverty strikes at their pride—my doctrines at their prejudices. My life condemns their lusts, their selfishness, their worldliness. Therefore “Blessed is he that is not offended with me”;—blessed because it

implies a true insight to my history, a living faith in my principles, a thorough sympathy with my Spirit, vital identification with my doctrines, doings, and destiny.

Germ of Thought.

SUBJECT :—*God, in the Moral Restoration of Man.*

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called : and whom he called, them he also justified : and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”—Rom. viii. 29, 30.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Twenty-ninth.

THIS passage has been the subject of endless disputes—a battle-ground on which Calvinists and Arminians have had many a fierce and resolute encounter. The best way to get a clear idea of such controverted passages, is to become utterly oblivious of all the conflicting opinions that they have started, and study them in the light of common sense, the light of their context, in the light of the general scope of biblical teaching, and in humble dependence upon the great Spirit for help. Our endeavors to look at these verses in this way, have led to the discovery that there is nothing concerning God in the work of human salvation, as set forth in the text, that you will not find in connexion with every other Divine operation.

Any work which an intelligent being has accomplished—whether it be in husbandry, architecture, legislation, or science—always implies three things : an *executive agency*, a *presiding plan*, and a *previous knowledge on which the plan is based*. These three things we have in the text concerning God, in the work of man’s restoration. The result comes

out of the agency ; the agency comes out of the plan ; the plan comes out of a previous knowledge. There are two ways of viewing this work of God :—starting from the Divine idea, and proceeding to the working out of the idea in His operations on man ; or reversing that order,—proceeding from His actual agency on man to the original idea. The former method would lead us to follow the order of the words, and would give us three facts.—First : That the great God foreknew all who should love Him. “ Whom he did foreknow.”—Secondly : That the great God has a plan concerning all who should love Him. “ Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate.”—Thirdly : That the great God pursues a certain course of agency towards those who should love Him. He “ calls,” “ justifies,” and “ glorifies,” them.

But we think that, by reversing the order of the words, and proceeding from the Divine act to the Divine idea, will bring the subject most clearly within our comprehension. We proceed, therefore, to infer from the passage :

I. THAT MAN'S RESTORATION IS THE RESULT OF GOD'S AGENCY. Paul speaks of God as doing three things. First : *He calls*. “ Whom he called.” God calls men in various ways :—by the admonitions of their conscience ; by the events of their history ; by the ministry of His word ; by the strivings of His Spirit. He calls them sometimes through the thundering voice of law, and sometimes through the melting accents of love. Secondly : *He justifies them*. “ Them he also justified.” Justification is a forensic term, but it does not convey forensic ideas. An accused person in the court of human judicature is justified when the verdict of “ *Not guilty* ” is returned ; and he may be pronounced “ *Not guilty* ” on three different grounds :—(1.) On the ground of actual innocence. (2.) On the ground of regretted accident. He might have committed the act, but without intention, or contrary to wish. (3.) On the ground of judicial ignorance. He might be really and morally guilty ; and yet

through the want of power on the part of judge and jury to detect the sophistries of his counsel, and to get at and understand all the evidence of the case, he may be pronounced "Not guilty." But no man, before God, could be justified or pronounced "Not guilty," on any of these grounds. Man is *not innocent*. He has committed the offence with which he is charged. He has committed the offence, not by *accident*, but by *intention*; and the great Judge knows all about it. *He* cannot be deceived. All that evangelical justification means is, that God treats the guilty as if they had never sinned—overlooking the past. Thirdly: He glorifies. "Them he also glorified." This is the finishing act of God. Man's body, intellect, character, and condition, are now inglorious. God will glorify the whole. "We shall be like him." The passage teaches—

II. THAT GOD'S AGENCY IS GOVERNED BY A PLAN. Some beings act without plan—act from instinct, from impulse, from habit; but God acts from plan. What is God's plan in connexion with the work of man's moral restoration? It is not to save men in their sins, or irrespective of their own conduct. He saves them (1.) by assimilating them to the image of Christ. "He also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son";—that they should be governed by the same principles that govern Him; animated by the same spirit that inspired Him; consecrated to the same great cause for which He gave His life. (2.) By subjugating them to the authority of Christ. "That he might be the firstborn among many brethren!" The first-born son amongst the Hebrews was the chief of the family. He was invested with authority almost equal to that of his father. The younger brethren were to yield to him obedience. Such is God's plan:—that Christ shall be the Head of the family of the redeemed; that all shall yield to Him. This is God's great predestined plan. His calling, justifying, and glorifying, are but the working out of this eternal idea.

Now, it does not follow that because Paul refers God's agency in man's salvation to an eternal plan, that He would not have referred His agency, in any other department of work, to an eternal plan, if he had been writing on some other divine work. As a pious man, he would refer everything that was good to God ; and as an intelligent man, he would refer everything to the plan of God. Had he been writing on agriculture, he would have traced every blade and flower and plant that grew to the predestination of God. Had he been writing on anatomy, he would have traced every organ, and limb, and joint, and vein, and nerve, and sinew, to the predestination of God. He would have said, with David, "In thy book all my members were written." Had he been writing on physics, he would have traced the structure and formation of every atom and every globe, of every rain-drop and every sea, of every beam of light and every sun, to the predestination of God. But he was writing of man's salvation, and it was only to his purpose to refer it to predestination in connexion with that. Predestination is not a dream of the schoolmen, or a dogma of Calvin, but an eternal law of the universe. The passage teaches—

III. THAT GOD'S PLAN IS FOUNDED ON A THOROUGH FOREKNOWLEDGE OF THE SAVED. "Whom he did foreknow." The relative pronoun, *whom*, here does not refer to all creatures, although God does foreknow all creatures,—every thing that ever has been, that ever will be. Every thing that is, or that is possible to be, is foreknown to God. The whole universe was once an idea in His mind. All His operations are but the working out of His ideas—the actualizing of eternal thoughts. Nor does the word "whom" here refer to mankind in general, although God does foreknow all that shall happen to all men. He knows all about all men that shall ever appear. He foreknew all about the lost. Nothing in the boundless future will ever occur that He did not know when He occupied immensity alone. But the word *whom* refers to those who should be saved ; those

spoken of in the preceding verse, and, indeed, in the whole chapter, as loving Him, as being His sons, &c. We may offer two remarks in relation to this foreknowledge :—(1.) That it does not interfere with the free agency of the good. A might have such a thorough knowledge of B's temperament and tendencies, that he might predict with certainty that B. would, under certain circumstances, adopt a certain line of action ; yet if B knew not the knowledge of A, he could not, by any possibility, have any influence upon his conduct. The fact, in like manner, that God knows all about me, all that I shall ever do, has no necessary influence upon my line of action. The conduct of the Jews at the crucifixion of Christ is an illustration. (2.) That it is a ground of security for the good. We often form plans from a very partial knowledge of things ; and we no sooner set to work in endeavoring to carry them out, than circumstances start up that we had never foreseen, and baffle us in all our attempts ; so that we are obliged to abandon our projects. But not so with God. His plan is based upon a thorough knowledge of all future contingencies. "What shall we then say to these things ? If God be for us," &c.

SUBJECT :—*Moral Childhood ; or, Christ's Answer to the Ambitious.*

"At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven ? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," &c.—Matt. xviii. 1—6.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Thirtieth.

WHICHEVER of the apostles put the question, "Who is the greatest?" it is of little importance. The question is, more or less, the question of all men. Ambition is an instinct of the soul. Christ's response to this question—a question

which, in some form and at some time, rises in every heart—must have struck the disciples as exceedingly strange. Had He said, He that is the most brave and victorious in battle, he that is most successful in merchandise, he that is most eminent in intellectual research, or he that is most popular in religious teaching, they might not have been surprised; but when He said, You must become as a “little child,” his reply must have clashed with all their preconceived notions of greatness.

In a previous germ we have noticed the child-like attributes which all men must *unavoidably* possess—those it is *criminal* to possess, and those which they are morally bound to possess.* It is this last class of attributes that Christ requires as the foundation of human greatness. Christ teaches, in this passage, that this is indispensable to all greatness.

He teaches—

I. THAT THIS CHILD-LIKENESS IS NECESSARY TO AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SPHERE OF TRUE GREATNESS. “Except ye be converted”—that is, unless you renounce your material notions of my kingdom, and love for worldly greatness, and become as a “little child,” in self-obliviousness, simplicity, and truth, “ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” This child-spirit is the condition of *entrance* into the kingdom of God. “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” There must be the renunciation of three things at the very threshold of this kingdom before *entrance is possible*.

First: *A practical renunciation of all obedience to secular distinctions.* “Whosoever would be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” In the empire of Christ, “the rich and the poor meet together.” The only distinctions recognised are distinctions in mental power and moral excellence. All are regarded as brethren. Lazarus, according to his goodness, is as great there as any one. The Baptist, in his cell,

* See *Homilist*, vol. v., p. 198.

is in this empire ; Herod, on his throne, is excluded. Paul, in his chains, is in this empire ; Felix, on the judgment-seat, is excluded. As the innocent child treats the beggar and the prince alike, so all the members of this spiritual empire act towards each other.

Secondly : *A practical renunciation of all ideas of self-importance.* Peter, when he entered, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me ; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." The publican, as he entered, exclaimed, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The Centurion felt that he was not worthy that Christ should enter his house. All ideas of self-merit and self-importance are left outside this kingdom.

Thirdly : *A practical renunciation of all ideas of self-seeking.* All ideas of self-interest and self-aggrandizement are abandoned. No man seeketh his own. The new spirit of love to God, and benevolence, must enter the soul before it can cross the threshold of this kingdom. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God ; for God is love." "The love of Christ constraineth" all in this empire. It nerves every arm, fires every heart, and governs every spirit. They that live there do "not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died and rose again." From the text, we learn—

II. THAT CHILD-LIKENESS DETERMINES THE DEGREE OF ELEVATION IN THE REALM OF TRUE GREATNESS. "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." David, who was great in this empire, felt himself to be "a worm, and no man." Isaiah, who sustained in this empire an eminent position, felt himself to be "a man of unclean lips." Paul, perhaps, who was higher than either in this blessed realm, considered himself less than "the least of all saints."

First : *He that is most child-like in this empire is "greatest" in real worth.* Real worth will always be determined by the loftiness of the correct thoughts which we have of the great God. It is on the wings of lofty thoughts that we rise Godward ; but the more lofty our thoughts, the more

profound our humility. "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and stars which thou hast ordained," &c. The greatest creatures in the universe bow, in the profoundest prostration, before the Infinite.

Secondly : *He that is most child-like is greatest in social power.* Who, in the nature of the case, is the man who will obtain the greatest sway over the mind of his fellow-man ? Not the haughty and the proud, who speaks and acts under a consciousness of his own superiority ; but the man who "minds not high things, but condescends to men of low estate." "Whosoever shall be great among you, let him be your minister ; and whosoever shall be chief among you, let him be your servant." This command involves an eternal social law. No man can ever become, really, a chief among men who does not serve. Christ Himself descended to the lowest human condition, identified Himself with the poorest, that He might gain a moral sovereignty over souls. The proud man may gain a material throne, and govern the bodies of men, but he will have no sovereignty over souls. Over the graves of the proud monarchs of the ancient world you may stand, and utter the language of the prophet :—"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning !" &c.

Thirdly : *He that is most child-like in this empire is greatest in the estimation of God.* The high and lofty One, whose name is holy, says, "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble," &c. "He hath respect unto the lowly." "He giveth grace unto the lowly." "He forgetteth not the cry of the humble," though "he poureth contempt upon princes," &c.

III. THAT CHILD-LIKENESS IDENTIFIES THE EXISTENCE WITH THE PRINCE OF TRUE GREATNESS. "Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me." Christ is the Head of the great empire of mind. "He is exalted far above all principalities and powers, and might and dominion," &c.

He is in the midst of the throne—the Centre of universal attraction, the Object of universal worship, the Source of all light and love. And yet He says, in relation to His humble disciples—

First : *That the treatment which men render to them He will regard as being rendered to Him.* “He that receiveth them receiveth me.” “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” The connexion between them and Christ is vital—vital as that between the members and the head. What they feel He feels.

Secondly : *That any injury inflicted on them, He will requite with the greatest punishment.* “Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” Christ here refers to one of the earliest forms of capital punishment as practised amongst the heathen—viz, casting into the sea. But He refers to this form of punishment here, in the strongest possible manner. Not merely is the criminal to be cast into the sea, but into the *depth* of the sea ; and not only is his body to be cast into the depths of the sea, but a *stone* is to be bound around his body lest he should rise. Nor is it a mere *stone* that is to be cast around his neck, but a heavy stone—“a millstone.” The idea is, that this terrible and ignominious punishment will be better for a man, than that he should do any injury to the humblest of Christ’s disciples.

Let us, then, brothers, cultivate this child state of heart. If we live to old age, there will come, necessarily, a second childhood—a childhood of the bodily members ; a childhood of the intellectual faculties. But let us, to beautify and to bless young life and old life, life here and life hereafter, cultivate this moral childhood—the childhood of the heart. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,” &c. “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God,” &c.

SUBJECT :—*The Record of Life.*

“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life :
and they are they which testify of me.”—John v. 39.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Thirty-first.

THESE words are interpreted by some as a *command*, by others as an *assertion*. One class of commentators regard the word rendered “search” as in the *imperative* mood, as our translators have evidently done; while another class regard it as in the *indicative*, making it a simple declaration or assertion,—“Ye search the scriptures,” &c. The original will bear either rendering; but, on the whole, it seems more in accordance with the scope and design of our Lord, on this occasion, to consider the words as containing an assertion or statement of what the Jews usually did. As if He had said, You have the scriptures, and you profess to study them. You have been taught to seek in them solid and satisfactory proofs of eternal happiness beyond the grave. You think you have this treasure clearly pointed out, and securely laid up in them; and this is true, but only true as “they testify of me,” for they declare that this life is in me.

The design of our remark, however, does not depend on the particular rendering, whether it be assertion or a command, but on the general sentiment of the words.

I. MEN HAVE EVERYWHERE, AND ALWAYS, DESIRED ETERNAL LIFE;—not in the special and glorious sense of the Christian revelation, but in the general sense of life hereafter. Immortality is the instinctive desire of humanity. Men have ever shuddered at the thought of annihilation, and looked for a life to come—a life beyond the reach of all the ills and sorrows of the present. The idea, even in the vaguest sense, comprehends two things:—(1.) Existence, with all its powers and elements; (2.) happiness, with all its attributes and enjoyments. This happy existence beyond death has been sought everywhere—toiled for, fought for,

suffered for. It has been sought in the schools of philosophy, in the halls of science, at the altars of ten thousand gods, in the mystic utterances of nature. Man's soul thirsts for a life that will be happy, and happy for ever. True, the right idea of it is gone, but the desire remains. Man was formed for happiness, and for immortality ; and though, by sin, he has become spiritually a wreck, still he has longings and desires after happiness and life for evermore. But nowhere does his ruin more sadly appear than in his efforts to reach the life, and secure the happiness.

II. THIS DESIRE HAS BEEN GENERALLY ASSOCIATED IN THE HUMAN MIND WITH THE IDEA OF A DIVINE REVELATION. The Jews had the Scriptures, of which they boasted, and in which they looked for eternal life. But the idea of which we speak was not peculiar to them. Wherever you can trace in man the desire for life hereafter, there you may also trace some idea of a communication from the Divine and the Invisible. The idea of happiness and life for ever is found in connexion with the notion of a divine revelation of some kind. It may have been in connexion with (1.) *written records* ; or it may have been in connexion with (2.) *celestial oracles*. But divine communication has been regarded, in some way, as necessary (1.) to reveal the region of life, and (2.) to point the way to life. Hence the Mahommedan glories in the Koran ; the Brahmin studies the Shaster ; the follower of Joseph Smith reads the "Book of Mormon" ; the disciple of Joanna Southcott still believes in "The Book of Wonders" ; and the Indian, who has no written record to which he can appeal, fancies communications, somehow, from his god, or from the Great Spirit. They search *their* scriptures, as the Jews did, because they think that in them they have eternal life. Everywhere men have cherished the hope of immortality, and have associated with it the idea of a revelation from their deity.

III. THIS IDEA IS REALIZED, AND THIS DESIRE MET, ONLY

IN THE REVELATION OF CHRIST, WHICH THE SCRIPTURES CONVEY. This is the great truth of the text. Life is in Christ alone, and the Word of God alone reveals Christ. The Jews read their Scriptures, but they did not find Christ in them, and therefore did not find the true life.

Two things are involved in the proposition :—

First : *The great subject of Scripture is Christ.* God has met the expectation, or desire, or instinct, of the human soul, and given to man a revelation. The grand theme of this communication from heaven is Christ. In the Old and New Testament the presiding genius is Christ ; the Master-Spirit is the Son of God—the Angel of the covenant, and the Saviour of men. The Scriptures testify of Christ in various ways. 1. *By prefiguration.* Every sacrifice pointed to Him. The Jewish ritual is inexplicable, unless viewed as symbolical and preparatory. The whole system—in its priesthood, and ceremonies, and services—witnessed continually to a mighty and momentous future in the advent and work of Jesus Christ. 2. *By prophecy.* “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” (Rev. xix. 10.) We cannot look into the writings of the prophets without perceiving this. Every page seems to sparkle with brightness, and to become radiant with glory, when read and understood in the light of the coming Messiah. His birth-place, His character, His sufferings, His death, His resurrection,—all were predicted. 3. *By history.* The fulness of time came : shadows gave place to substance. We have the sacred narrative of the life of Jesus ; and such a narrative !—luminous with the glory of the Godhead ! “Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh.” In the gospels we have the Divine portraiture of the Son of God, drawn by the Spirit of truth.

Secondly : *The great burden of Scripture testimony to Christ is, that He is our life.* The Scriptures testify that He is the Author and Dispenser of true life to man. He is the “Prince of life” ; His Gospel is the “Word of life.” “In him was life ; and the life was the light of men.” (John i. 4.)

Then men were dead—spiritually dead—dead in trespasses and in sins. “This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” (1 John v. 11.) How is our highest life thus in Christ? What do the Scriptures testify? 1. The Scriptures present Christ as making atonement for sin, and *thus providing the ground of life*. Until guilt be removed from the soul, it cannot live. Man is alienated from God, and alienation is death. The pressure and gloom of death are upon him. Christ came to give His life a ransom for the many. “He died, the Just, for the unjust.” He was made a curse for us; and now God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. Thus man may live anew. 2. The Scriptures present Christ as procuring Divine influence, and *thus providing the means of life*. Mere deliverance from the curse is not enough: something must be done *in* man, as well as *for* him. Man can be “born again”—introduced into the new spiritual life—only by the spirit of God. It is His to quicken and regenerate the soul; and the gift of the Spirit is the reward of the Saviour’s suffering and the evidence of His triumph;—so that we live through Him. 3. The Scriptures present Christ as exhibiting a perfect humanity, and *thus providing the model of life*. “He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.” “He has left us an example, that we should follow His steps.” We behold in Him—in His human nature—God’s ideal and type of manhood. Hence the nearer that we get to Christ—the more that we become like Him—so much the more shall we partake of the power and blessedness of true, undying life. 4. The Scriptures present Christ as overcoming death, and *thus providing for the triumph of life*. Suppose that guilt should be removed from the soul, and the new life begun in it, how are we sure that death will not affect it, so as to blight its beauty and dissipate its joy? Jesus is “the resurrection and the life.” He has “abolished death.” Union to Him secures a life, over which neither death nor hell has any power. “He vanquished death in its own domain. “Because He lives, His people will live also;”

—live for ever to behold His glory, and gladden in His presence. This is the consummation of life—its everlasting triumph ; for death will be swallowed up of victory.

Thus the Scriptures testify of Christ, and of life in Him. Learn—(1.) If we would live as men—live in the sight of God ; live the life worthy of our position and being—we must know Christ. This is not a matter of mere theological sentiment, but a matter of spiritual fact. Life for poor, frail, sinful humanity is in Christ alone. (2.) If we would know Christ, we must go to Scripture, and study God's testimony. Nature, in all her glories, utters us language which tells us of Him. God has spoken to us by His Son, and of life through Him. Let us hear Him, that we may live.

JAMES SPENCE, D.D.

SUBJECT :—*The True in Life.*

“And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God.”—1 Sam. xxiii. 16.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Thirty-second.

Two lessons stand out saliently in this chapter. First : *That the most heroic heart may sometimes be overcome with fear.* Few men had a more intrepid soul than the conqueror of Goliath ; yet now he was driven by fear of Saul into the wood. We are subject to variations of mood. There are seasonal changes and reactions in the soul. Secondly : *That the crimes of a father may alienate the hearts of his children.* Jonathan the son of Saul was now succouring the man whom his own sire hated, and sought to destroy. Some parents complain of the undutifulness of their children. They often deserve it. Evil, even in a parent, cannot be loved, nor wrong in a parent obeyed. The text gives us three facts :—

I. THE DEEP IMPRESSION OF A TRUE SOUL. Few men ever had a truer soul than David—clear in its perceptions of truth,

strong in its attachments to truth, inflexible in its allegiance to truth. But that soul, in the "wood" here, is under depression. His soul was "cast down"; his spirit was disquieted within him. Several things tend to depress the true spirit in this world. First: *Seemingly adverse circumstances*. Jacob:—"All these things are against me." Secondly: *Providential discrepancies*. Job, Asaph. "My foot had well nigh slipped." Thirdly: *Non-success in religious service*. Elijah resorts to the cave. Jeremiah says "he will speak no more." Isaiah, "I have laboured in vain." Fourthly: *Consciousness of moral unworthiness*. Moses "hid his face"; Isaiah cried, "Woe is me"; Paul, "O wretched man that I am." Fifthly: *Physical infirmities*. Mighty, though inexplicable, is the power which the body has upon the soul. Christ seemed to feel it when He said, "What shall I say? Save me from this hour," &c.

II. THE DISTINGUISHING POWER OF A TRUE MAN. What is the distinguishing power which a true man has? To *destroy* life! Brutes can do this. To weaken faith, and shake confidence? A child can do this. What then? To *strengthen a brother's heart in God*! This is what Jonathan did now in "the wood." He "strengthened" David's "hand"—his soul—"in God." But how can a true man strengthen a depressed brother thus? First: *By a truthful exposition of God's method of governing the fallen in this world*. The Gospel unfolds that method; shows that it is to the true corrective, not penal; remedial, not destructive; introductory, not final. "Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment," &c. Secondly: *By a practical expressson of genuine sympathy*. Nothing in the world is more strengthening to a tried soul than the practical manifestation of true sympathy. One breath of it infuses new life to the soul—energizes the heart. Thirdly: *By a devout intercession with Heaven*. Paul prayed that the Ephesians might be "strengthened with all might in the inner man." This, then, is the *distinguishing* power of a true man. It is easy to weaken men's faith, to undermine their principles. The poor sceptic

without much genius, with but little knowledge, and with no conviction, can do this; but it is the power of a true man alone that can strengthen men in God.

III. THE HIGHEST FUNCTION OF A TRUE FRIEND. It is one thing to have the power to strengthen, and another thing to use it when and where required. He who uses it is the truest friend. Jonathan proved his friendship to David now by tracking him out in the lonely wood, and there—in the depths of solitude, in the sanctuary of wild, but majestic nature—inbreathing invigorating thoughts about God. Let us, in imagination, go into this “wood,” and see Jonathan acting the friend. He meets David, with a heavy gloom upon his brow, only able to speak in sighs and tears. First: Perhaps Jonathan makes a few general consolatory remarks about the great providence of God. Then, secondly, perhaps he refers him to the trials of the good men who had passed away: Abraham and Jacob, Moses and Samuel. Then, thirdly, perhaps he reminds him of the past kindness of God towards him as an individual. Says to him, perhaps,—David, do you remember, when you were a shepherd, the lion and the bear that came into your field, and threatened your life? Who delivered you then, my friend? Was it not God? He is with you now in this lonely wood. And do you remember your encounter with Goliath the other day, David? Who made you victorious over the terror of our country? Was it not God! That God will not forsake you, my beloved friend! Trust in Him that liveth for ever. And then, fourthly, perhaps he kneels down under the shadow of some old tree, and prays with him and for him.

This is the way to strengthen souls, and he is the true friend who acts thus. Who is my friend? Not the man who seeks to shake my faith in God by mooted perplexing questions; not the man who seeks to discourage me in my work by parading my difficulties; but the man whose aim it is, by his sympathies and words, and prayers and works, to brace the heart anew—give new fire to the inspiration and nerve to the purpose.

SUBJECT :—*The Spiritual Significance of the Universe.*

“O Lord, how manifold are thy works ! in wisdom hast thou made them all : the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships : there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein,” &c.—Psa. civ. 24—30.

Analysis of *Psalm the Two Hundred and Thirty-third.*

IN this psalm—in some respects the sublimest of inspired productions—the writer has presented a most comprehensive sketch of the universe. It appears as though nothing had escaped his eye. He beholds the Deity enwrapped in light, as with a mantle ; the heavens are spread out as a curtain. God makes the clouds his chariot, and walks upon the wings of the wind. The foundations of the earth are unbared, and the depths of great waters are sounded. The Psalmist stands on the lofty mountains, and watches the springs gushing in crystal beauty ; he marks the wild ass quenching his thirst ; he hears the fowls of heaven singing among the branches ; he observes the vital sap circling in the trees of the Lord, and is impressed with the majesty of the mighty cedars which crown the crested peaks of Lebanon. His eye notes the bird building its nest, the wild goat scaling the high hills, and the feeble cony finding its lodgment in the rock :—then, raising his vision to the firmament, the Psalmist watches the moon as she keeps her seasons, and is enraptured with the golden splendour of the setting sun. Anon he hears the roar of the lion, as it shakes the forest in its cry for prey ;—and after thus marking the great and the minute in nature, his soul overflows with wonder and with praise. Hence he exclaims, “O Lord, how manifold are thy works ! in wisdom hast thou made them all.”

Let these preliminary points be noted. First : *That material creation is not unfavourable to moral culture.* It is not a “vale of tears” only. Our consciousness of guilt prevents our enjoying fully the fragrance and the beauty of

God's handiwork. Second : *That all agencies are under the control of a Parental Intelligence.* He knows every pulse that throbs in the universe. Not a tempest can roar but by His permission, and not a dew-drop can fall from the eyelids of the morning without attracting His glance. He knows and governs all. Third : *That the Divine resources are equal to every exigency.* Nature has perpetually recurring necessities. In every moment, in every part of the universe there are hands outstretched and eyes upturned to ONE CENTRAL OBJECT. What is the reply to this million-tongued appeal? Verse 28th contains the answer :—"Thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good." Mark the infinite ease of this mode. An opening of the hand is all ! What a contrast this to the perplexity of man under passing circumstances ? The Divine hand contains a universe of good.

These three particulars being accepted, the psalm suggests—

I. THAT THE DIVINE EXISTENCE SHOULD CONSTITUTE THE CENTRAL FACT IN ALL CONTEMPLATIONS OF THE UNIVERSE. In this single psalm there are no fewer than fifty references, by noun or pronoun, to the existence, creative power, and sustaining energy, of a personal God. This reflection serves—First : *To disprove the speculations of Pantheism.* Pantheism teaches that God and nature are convertible terms. The Psalmist and the Pantheist are mutually opposed. Second : *To annihilate the materialistic theory.* Materialism recognises no *mind* in the universe. All is *matter*—matter in various developments and phases. Third : *To invest the universe with a mystic sanctity.* It is His handiwork. The wind is sacred, when I remember that "HE walketh on the wings of the wind." The Psalmist looks upon creation with the eye of a poet-worshipper. All worship is instinct with true poetry. Wherever the devotional element is at once strong and intelligent, there will exist a true appreciation of God's material works. The grand and the simple, the sublime and the beautiful, will awaken corresponding emotions in the heart of the true worshipper.

II. THAT THE PRINCIPLE OF DEPENDENCE IS EVERYWHERE DEVELOPED IN THE UNIVERSE. "These wait all upon thee." From this we infer—First: *That there exists an absolutely self-existent Power.* We cannot comprehend the *modus existendi*, but there is the *fact*. Second: *That each part of the universe has its own mission.* God made nothing in vain. Third: *That profound humility becomes every intelligent agent.* "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" How that question blasts our petty vanity! Men of genius, men of wealth, and men of power, propound this enquiry to yourselves.

III. THAT AN INTELLIGENT CONTEMPLATION OF THE UNIVERSE IS CALCULATED TO INCREASE MAN'S HATRED OF SIN. The Psalmist terminates his survey by the exclamation, "Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more." It is calculated to do this—First: *Because sin mars the harmony of law.* Unity is broken. Second: *Because God, in having made so wondrous a universe, has proved Himself too good a Being to be disobeyed.* Sin is not only a violation of law, but an insult to *Goodness*.

Have you never stood amid some glorious scenery, crowned with the foliage of summer, and felt that *you* were the only representative of sin? "Only man is vile," &c. What is the voice of this psalm to my heart? (1.) *God must occupy the supreme place in thought.* (2.) *That I sustain intimate relationships to God.* There is *one* relationship I *must* sustain; viz., that of a dependant. But mere animals do so. The worm beneath my foot is a dependant. Am I not a son? (3.) *This beneficent Creator has also revealed Himself as man's Saviour.* (Col. 1.) Do I love the Saviour? (4.) *The extinction of sin should form a prominent object in the life of the good.* God has honoured human agency in the matter of moral regeneration. The greatest benefactor is he who does most to purify spiritual life, by the means which the Lord Jesus has appointed.

JOSEPH PARKER.

SUBJECT:—*Goodness and Severity in the Manifestation of God.*

“Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God.”—Rom. xi. 22.

Analysis of *Homily the Two Hundred and Thirty-fourth.*

WE are not to understand, by the “severity of God,” any severe or cruel passion in Him; not that He is strict and severe in demanding all His rights from man; nothing like what the wicked servant said of Him,—“For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man,” &c. Quite different from this is the character of God revealed in the Bible. The word severity is taken here from the act of the gardener or vine-dresser in trimming trees or vines, and cutting off the decayed or useless branches; and it refers to the act of God in cutting off and rejecting the unbelieving Jews as useless branches; and it teaches that the Lord, after all the display of His goodness and longsuffering towards men, will at last meet the impenitent sinner with all the awful, but just, threatenings of His holy word. We invite the attention of the reader to the following brief remarks:—

I. THAT IN EVERY REVELATION WE HAVE OF GOD, THE TWO PHASES OF GOODNESS AND SEVERITY APPEAR. Look to *nature*: there is no scarcity of displays of Divine goodness in the creation. The external world radiates goodness from every point. Man’s constitution, and the adaptation of the outward world to its wants, and feelings, and faculties, show it also.

But if you turn, and look on the same God letting loose the mighty storm—breaking the bands of the whirlwind; giving leave to the earthquake to shake the earth, and swallow great cities without a moment’s notice; waking thunders with His voice, and shooting the lightning out of His hand;—these all are like destroying angels, devouring their prey, and making the soul tremble and gaze on something that he cannot call goodness. Look to *providence*. On the whole, we must feel and confess that it is a great and

grand manifestation of the goodness of God. Here He openeth His liberal hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing, filling our hearts with food and joy. But, now and then, He throws the arrow from His bow, "which flieth by day, and the pestilence that walketh in darkness"—sends affliction and death into the abodes of men, multiplying widows and orphans. If all occurrences and events are under His control, the "goodness and severity of God" are visible enough in every day's providence. Look to the *Bible*. The goodness of God is the subject of the Bible. But, even here, the mixture of these two elements will surely strike the mind of the thinking reader. If goodness appears in giving Eden, with all its abundance and blessings, severity appears in the curse and expulsion. If goodness appeared in the preaching of Noah, and the preparation of an ark, severity flashed, as most vivid lightning, in drowning a world with the deluge. If goodness was seen in favouring Israel with Canaan, severity is manifest enough in destroying the Canaanites in their own land. Yes; and in the history of Israel itself we have goodness and severity manifested. Goodness led them out of Egypt, and divided the sea before them. He guided them with a pillar of cloud and fire; He gave them bread from heaven, and water out of the rock;—but severity appears too, as you see judgments descending upon them—thousands falling by the swords of their enemies. Look to the *cross*. "For God so loved the world," &c. There is goodness. "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow," &c. Here is severity. Look to the *rejection of the Jewish nation*. The Jews were the elected people of God—His portion, His inheritance. He nursed them in His bosom as a Father. He gave "Egypt for their ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for them";—but after all, when they would not receive His Son—when they would not receive the testimony of His only-begotten Son—behold, His axe is laid unto the root of their tree. He casted them away from His sight—left them unsheltered to the horrors of war, the fury of fire, and the

terribleness of hunger. Their little ones were dashed against the stones, their blood flowed in their sanctuary, and their temple and city were burnt to ashes. The heavy cloud of the wrath of God Almighty, which was accumulated by their unbelief, broke, with all its awful contents, upon their heads. "Because the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost."

II. THAT THE DISPLAY OF THESE TWO PHASES OF THE DIVINE CHARACTER IS NECESSARY TO MAN IN THIS WORLD. First: *They are necessary to keep the mind from extremes.* Man is a creature subject to extremes. One day we are subject to be too much elevated, and the other too depressed. They keep ballast on board ships to keep them level in the storm. Many a sight and circumstance meet us in this world to throw our ships—our minds—aside, but the two phases that run through all manifestations of God, constitute a moral power to regulate them on their passage over the stormy sea of this life. "Behold the goodness and severity of God." Perhaps in heaven there is no need of severity to govern the minds of the inhabitants;—only the power of goodness and love. The great Father has no need of hanging the rod in the sight of those that dwell there: but where there is sin, it requires another element to govern the mind. Another object in view is—Secondly: *It is necessary to induce sinners to repent.* Far be it from us to think that the gracious and merciful God takes pleasure in manifesting His severity towards His creature. No! the "Lord doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men"; but He does it for good. He inflicts a less evil to save from a greater; on the same principle, and with the same object, as the father in chastising his son. "Thou shalt beat him with the rod." To vex him? To kill him! No, but "to deliver his soul from hell." The great object of this goodness and severity in the manifestations of God is to lead men "to fear God, and eschew evil."

The goodness of God, in nature, in providence, and espe-

cially in the Bible, calls after the sinner. Like a kind father, it climbs the hill, and cries after the prodigal,—“Return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon thee”: His door is open, his table is laid and prepared, his arms are stretched out, and his bosom burns with love. “Return; he will abundantly pardon.” And the *severity* of God stands threatening before the sinner, with flaming sword and destroying weapons in His hand,—not on the way to the tree of life now, but on the way of death, to save him from destruction; and He cries with a thundering voice, “If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.” Beware, O sinner, of rushing against Him. His sword is sharp, His arm is strong. He will rend thy soul, “and that without remedy.”

In this world we see “goodness and severity” together; but hereafter they will be separated. The severity of God without His goodness is in hell—in furious and unquenchable flames, lighted by His justice, and they will burn for ever. And what is heaven? An eternal feast of the goodness and love of God, without a shadow of severity. May the goodness and severity of God here lead and guide us to that blessed abode there!

T. LEVI.

SUBJECT:—*Unbelief; Irrational, Inconsistent, and Criminal.*

“He marvelled because of their unbelief.”—Mark vi. 6.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Thirty-fifth.

We have many instances illustrative of the same principle—that a prophet is not without honor, &c. When a man, by force of genius, transcends the humble sphere in which he was born, and rises superior to the companions of his youth, you will find, not unfrequently, that they who should be the first, are the last, to acknowledge his merit.

So strong was this prejudice against Christ, that it

interfered with his public ministry. In Matt. xiii. 58, we read that "*He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief*"; and in the fifth verse of this chapter we have the strong and very remarkable assertion—*οὐκ ἔδυνάτο*—that "*he could there do no mighty work,*" &c.

Christ marvelled because of the unbelief of the Nazarenes, and we are inclined to marvel too at the way in which Christ's words and works were regarded by His countrymen of old, and to imagine how differently *we* should have acted. That we should have acted differently is not at all clear. In not a few respects are we more favourably situated than those Nazarenes. We are free from the prejudices which darkened their minds; we have a vast amount of evidence which then did *not exist*.

Man's *refusal to believe*, and especially his objection to the *requirement of faith*, is at once *irrational, inconsistent, and criminal*.

I. IT IS IRRATIONAL. Faith we regard as the necessary condition of all intelligences save *One*; for we can conceive of but *two extremes* which can possibly exclude its operation. First: A state of *unlimited and perfect knowledge*, which can only be attributed to *God*. Second: A state of *absolute uncertainty and doubt*, which, being equivalent to intellectual death, we can attribute to *no intelligence whatever*. Angels, however exalted their station, however extensive their knowledge, are subject to the condition, and live by the exercise, of faith. *Faith is a necessary condition in the spiritual life and prayers of all finite intelligences.*

II. IT IS INCONSISTENT. This will appear—First: If we consider that, in reference to *all* the affairs of this life, man unhesitatingly fulfils this condition. This requires neither proof nor illustration. A moment's reflection will convince you how much more frequently you act on probabilities, and those of a very low class, than on certainties. Indeed, in one sense, a being whose very existence is

dependent on *the unconditional will* of another, can have no *real certainty*; and it is on such a tenure that we hold our life; and yet men engage in their business with the utmost confidence, believing that they shall live, though before they could express their belief they *may die*. The bond of society, the condition of government, the mainspring of commerce, the source of literature, science, and art, is faith. In this present life, this condition is by men at once submitted to, and regarded as natural and necessary, if they think; and so natural that, in the majority of instances, it awakens no thought whatever.

This, then, being so obvious, is it not equally apparent that men act an exceedingly inconsistent part in refusing to exercise faith in reference to *things spiritual*, while they so unhesitatingly exercise it in reference to *things temporal*? And this becomes more clearly apparent when we consider—Secondly: That the evidence of the Gospel is of a *higher and more satisfactory* kind than that on which man acts generally in this life. It is impossible here to do more than glance at a subject so extensive. Take almost any circumstance of your daily life; consider the evidence upon which, in reference to it, you will act with the utmost fearlessness; compare it with that which upholds gospel truth, and you will see at once how inferior it is, both in nature and degree. Indeed, of its kind, we can hardly conceive of anything more complete than the gospel evidence.

III. IT IS CRIMINAL. Notice the assertions of Scripture to this effect. These may be independently sustained. A man who does not believe, either *has not*, or *he has, examined* into the evidences on which the Gospel rests. First: If he has *not* examined, then is he guilty of wilful *neglect and indifference*. Though a *continuous* state of indifference in reference to any subject is not praiseworthy, yet there are many things constantly presented to us of so unimportant and trivial a nature, that it is a matter of little moment whether we have a definite opinion concerning

them or not. This is very far from being the case with the Gospel. *There*, while its evidence may not be enough to demand *immediate belief*, it is more than enough to demand *immediate and careful investigation*. Moreover, *till* the evidences of the Gospel have undergone a thorough investigation, a man has *no right to disbelieve*; for to avow disbelief in, or to deny the truth of, anything with which you are but partially acquainted, or not acquainted at all, is not merely *absurd*, but *positively dishonest*. Secondly: *If he has examined* the evidences of the Gospel, and yet remains an unbeliever, then, *unless* he can show good and sufficient grounds for his *rejection* of the evidence, we must view his avowed disbelief as the result of one of two causes:—either on the one hand as the result of some *mental inaptitude* for the appreciation of evidence, of perceiving its relations and following it out to its necessary conclusions, which, as involuntary, may be left out of account; or, on the other hand, as the result of a wilful and determined pursuit of a wrong course, in opposition to, and in spite of, all evidence to the contrary. The old case of loving darkness rather than light, because, &c. The criminality of this all will admit.

We would now allude to another much larger class, and by their own showing, a very objectionable one. Those whom we have hitherto considered make *no profession*, or, if any, an *unchristian* one. We now refer to the *nominal* believer—the *practical disbeliever*. In this land, as in all other lands by courtesy called Christian, there are an immense number who avow a belief in the Gospel, which they do *not* experience, and declare an interest which they are far from feeling. There are *some* who view their religious creed very much as a *birthright*—a *consequence* of being born in a *certain place*, and of certain parents. They give as ready an assent to the Gospel as they do to the laws of their country, and have an equally clear understanding of *both*. There are *many* who hold their religious very much in the same way as they do their other opinions; *i. e.*, not because of any intelligent conviction of their truthfulness, but mainly or solely because

they are held by the majority of those with whom they have to do;—a class of individuals this, who—if the generally recognised religion were to change from Christianity to Mahommedanism, or any other form—would, in the course of a very few days or weeks, have quite as firm, and no doubt quite as rational, a belief in the *new*, as they had in the old creed. Their motto is, *Vox populi, &c.*

We might enumerate many other classes, which, with these, we should rank among the *practical* unbelievers. All these occupy a *false* position; and so far as it is occupied consciously and wilfully, a criminal one. Altogether we think now, as heretofore, Christ has great occasion to marvel because of the unbelief of men.

SUBJECT :—*The Spiritual Aspects of Spring.*

“Thou sendeth forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.”—Psa. civ. 30.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Thirty-sixth.

THIS psalm, and even this verse, shows that the writer was neither an Atheist, Polytheist, nor Pantheist. Had he been an Atheist, he would have spoken of nature, or the laws of nature, “renewing the face of the earth”; but he speaks of an agency separate from nature. Had he been a Polytheist, he would have spoken of the various changes and operations going on upon the earth as referable to certain specific deities. He would have had a deity for the mountain and the meadow; one for guiding the streams, and another for launching the thunder; one for the desolation of winter, and another for the brightness and beauty of spring;—but he refers the whole to some *one*—“Thou.” Had he been a Pantheist, he would have regarded the various changes of nature simply as the developments and modifications of God himself;—but he refers all to the operations of one *personal*

existent—"Thou." The words show that he believed in the existence of *one personal Being*, the *fontal* Source of all life and activity throughout the universe.

I. LET US LOOK AT SPRING AS A REVELATION OF GOD. Nature is a revelation of God. "The heavens declare the glory," &c. Unlike the Bible, however, it is not stereotyped. Every season has new editions—every fresh life is a new chapter.

"The rolling year
Is full of thee. Forth in the pleasing Spring
Thy beauty walks, thy tenderness and love."

From the Spring I learn several lessons about God. First: *The profuseness of His vital energy*. Life is starting from every pore of nature. The whole face of the earth heaves and throbs with an exhaustless tide of life. Every spot teems with existence. Who does not feel impressed with the infinite affluence of "the Fountain of life." Secondly: *The wonderful tastefulness of God*. The tastefulness of God—we use the word for want of a better—is an attribute which theologians too frequently overlook, but which Spring-nature presses on our attention. It is wonderful in the exquisite structure, form, and hues, of even the minutest part of life:—wonderful in the boundless variety; wonderful in the distribution, arrangement, and grand effect, of the whole. How miserably poor do the provisions which the great artists of the world have made for our æsthetic sentiments appear, compared with those which you have scattered exuberantly over every part of the earth! Beauty fills the world. It meets the eye at every turn. Thirdly: *The calm ease with which He carries on His work*. He pours forth these oceans of new life without any effort. How quietly all is done! Storms are no exceptions; they are not the bluster of effort, but the occasional freaks of an overflowing energy. Fourthly: *The regularity of His procedure*. For six thousand years He has never neglected the work of Spring, and never been behind His time.

This is but a portion of the revelation which Spring gives me of the GREAT ONE. But the great lesson which the effect of the whole gives is undefinable. It cannot be put into propositions: it is for the heart. Like sound, ring one note, and it only vibrates painfully on the hearing nerve; but combine all in musical arrangement, and their strains will thrill the soul. There is a spirit of divine poetry in Spring that goes to the heart;—a spirit that the intellect cannot interpret—a spirit that the tongue cannot describe.

II. LET US LOOK AT SPRING AS THE EMBLEM OF HUMAN LIFE. The Bible so regards it. "It cometh up like a flower," &c. First: *Both in Spring and human life there are vast capabilities of improvement.* Spring is the season when Providence submits to the agriculturist what sort of harvest he shall have. With skill and industry he may, during the spring days, make nature yield him wonderful results. The cloud, the sky, the dew, the shower, the soil, of Spring have *special* powers for the future. So is human life here. Out of the human soul *now* seraphic powers, and forms, and faculties, may grow. Secondly: *Both in Spring and human life there is remarkable changeability.* No season so changeable as Spring:—alternate clouds and sunshine, storm and calm, cold and heat, "make up the April day." What an emblem of human life! What a scene of vicissitudes! Thirdly: *Both in Spring and human life there are many fallacious promises.* Spring is the season of promise. The rich bud and blossom of fruit trees, the strong green stalk of the corn-fields, have often created bright hopes, which in Autumn have been terribly disappointed. So is life. Look at youth, &c. Fourthly: *Both in Spring and human life there is nothing that can substitute for the present.* No other season can do the work of Spring. The man who neglects his field in Spring, may toil on it to the utmost in Summer without any effect. So it is with life. There is no period that can be a substitute for the present.

III. LET US LOOK AT SPRING AS A SYMBOL OF MORAL RENOVATION. The Bible looks upon it in this light. (Isa. lxi. 11; Psa. lxxxv. 11.) First: *The new spiritual life is like the Spring in the season from which it has emerged.* The Spring has come out of a cold, dark, desolate, chaotic Winter. The state of an unregenerate soul is, indeed, a Winter state. Secondly: *The new spiritual life is like the Spring in the tenacity with which the past seeks to maintain its hold.* How reluctantly old Winter yields its sceptre. For weeks it will continue to intrude. It will breathe its cold blasts upon the face of Spring—put its rough and chilly hand suddenly and violently upon its warm bosom.

“Winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,
Chills the pale morn, and bids the driving sleet
Deform the day.”

It is so with the new spiritual life. The old life will often intrude suddenly and insidiously. Thirdly: *The new spiritual life, like Spring, tends to a perfect future.* The power of Winter will gradually die away, the lovely Summer will come, and then the golden Autumn.

IV. LET US LOOK AT SPRING AS A TYPE OF THE GENERAL RESURRECTION. The Bible looks upon it in this light. (1 Cor. xv. 36—41.) First: *Spring-life is a resuscitation.* It is not properly a new creation: it grows out of the past. The seeds of all have flourished on the earth before. Some have remained dormant for centuries. So in the Resurrection. Each raised body will be, in some way, the outcome of a body that lived before. Secondly: *Spring-life is a resuscitation from apparently extinct life.* “That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.” It is not until signs of life are gone that germination begins. It is even so with the resurrection. The resurrection-body starts from the grave ages after all signs of life are gone. Thirdly: *Spring-life is a resuscitation against which many antecedent objections might have been raised.* That the verdure, and bud, and flower, that now cover the face of the earth, should start from little

grains that had turned to dust, would be *a priori* as improbable as that all the generations of men shall stand again upon the earth. You see Spring-life “swallowing up death in victory”; and so it will be in the Resurrection.

The seed, the insentient seed,
Buried beneath the earth, and rotted in the soil,
Starts from its dusty bed,
Responsive to the voice of Spring,
And covers mead and mountain,
Field and forest, with its life.
Myriads of creatures, too, that lay
As dead as dust on every inch of ground,
Touched by the vernal ray,
Spring from their little graves, and sport
On beauteous wing in fields of sunnied air.
Shall this be so? Shall plants and worms
Come forth to live again? And O shall man
Descend into his grave to rise no more?
Shall he, the master of this world,
Image and offspring of the FONTAL LIFE,
Through endless ages sleep in dust?

SUBJECT :—*The Unwrought Purposes of the Heart.*

“And the Lord said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart. Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name.”—1 Kings viii. 18, 19.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Thirty-seventh.

WE learn from these verses—

I. THAT GOOD MEN OFTEN LEAVE THE WORLD WITH PURPOSES IN THE HEART UNWROUGHT. David had purposed building a house for God, but he was not allowed to work that purpose out. This is only a sample of what is occurring every hour—good men dying with unwrought purposes.

The student, the minister, the statesman, the reformer, often leave the world with souls full of great plans of usefulness entirely undeveloped. This fact shows two things. First: *The incompleteness of this life.* A complete state of life would be an exact correspondence between the power of purposing and the power of executing. It seems to be so amongst brutes. The discrepancy is fraught with much disappointment and trial. Secondly: *The possibility of an after-life.* It can never be that, under the government of a merciful God, this discrepancy will go on for ever.

II. THAT A GOOD PURPOSE IN THE HEART, THOUGH UNWROUGHT, IS PLEASING TO THE GREAT GOD. "Thou didst well that it was in thine heart." Reason suggests the truth of this. The purpose is the essence of the act, the performance is but the accident. The Bible teaches this. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." First: *This fact is encouraging to the Christian who lacks executive energy.* God accepts the will for the deed. Secondly: *This is a check to those who are ever ready to pronounce upon character.* Some perform acts that are outwardly, and therefore accidentally, good, but inwardly, and therefore essentially, bad; and some perform acts that are externally and incidentally bad, but internally and intentionally good. Judge nothing, therefore, before the time.

III. THAT THE GOOD PURPOSE WHICH ONE MAN ORIGINATES IS OFTEN TAKEN UP AND WROUGHT OUT BY ANOTHER. "But thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name." Solomon carried out the purposes of David's heart when he was sleeping in his grave. Thus it is: children take up the broken plans of their sires. "Other men enter into our labors," &c. This teaches, first, the moral connexion of the race. Generations not only send down their nature, but also their plans and their principles. This teaches, secondly, the accumulative responsibility of the race. One generation bequeaths plans and

purposes to another, and thus the world is enriched. This teaches, thirdly, the probable restoration of the race. According to the amount of good ideas wrought out, the world advances; and good ideas augment with every age. The world advances as children work out the good ideas of their sainted sires. The great temple of human perfection will one day be completed.

Old Standards and New;

OR,

GENUINE AND SHAM ORTHODOXY.

JOHN HOWE.

WHEN a great teacher delivers his message, it often happens that the vitality of his doctrine and the energy of his spirit draw upon him the hatred and persecution of contemporaries. Yet he does not live in vain. His principles, sooner or later, find their way to power, his biography is written in the history of his country, and his name enrolled among those of its illustrious sons. But when his genuine disciples have departed, and the husk of his doctrine alone remains, the age is dead as before. Then new champions are raised up, with the same destiny. This process is ever repeated in history. "Ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them." John Howe was not indeed killed, but he was ejected; and his name is now honoured by many who in spirit are exceedingly unlike him. Christ and His apostles, who were the heretics of their day, made frequent quotations from the Old Testament. "Have ye never read?" was the formula of this *argumentum ad homines*. The Scribes of Judea had, however, at least read the letter of Moses and the prophets. It was the spirit that they knew not. But it is hardly possible to suppose that men

really conversant with even the letter of the seventeenth century divines, could avoid recognizing the identity of the doctrine of these heretics with that of many now who enjoy not the confidence of the men who "build the sepulchres of the prophets." "Have ye never read?"

John Howe's Sympathy with the Philosophers, especially with Plato.

"That Platonic Jew (Philo) judgeth invocation of God, with hope towards him, to be, if we will speak the truth, the only genuine property of man."*

"The incomparable Dr. Cudworth, in his Intellectual System."†

"As, with the Egyptians, the inscription of the temple at Sais shows, 'I am all that is, or was, or shall be,' &c.; and with the Grecians, their worshipping God, under the name of Pan: which could mean no other thing, than that they thought the Deity to comprehend eminently or virtually all beings besides, in its creative or productive power. And we have reasons to think that Pagan philosophers since Christ, such as Hierocles, Iamblichus, Porphyry, Plotinus, &c., who (as others have observed) were manifestly of this sentiment, understood the minds of the more ancient philosophers."‡

"This famous sect, the Platonists."§

"And we are told by the great Pagan theologue (Plato, in Phaedrus), in what state we can have the felicity of that spectacle. Not in our present state; when we have, indeed, but obscure representations of such things as are with souls of highest excellency; but when we are associated to the 'blessed quire.' When we are delivered from the body (which we now carry about as the oyster doth its shell); when we are no longer sensible of the evils of time. When we wholly apply ourselves to that blessed vision; are admitted to the beholding of the simple, permanent sights; and behold them, being ourselves pure, in the pure light; then have we the view of the bright, shining pulchritude," &c.**

His Mysticism.

"All the things we behold are, in some respect or other (internal or external), continually changing, and therefore could never long be beheld as they are."††

"Since we can frame no notion of life which self-active power doth not, at least, comprehend (as upon trial we shall find that we cannot),

* Living Temple, Part I., chap. ii. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid., Part II., chap. iii. § Ibid., Part II., chap. iv. ** Blessedness of the Righteous, chap. v. †† Living Temple, Part I., chap. ii.

it is consequent that this Being is also originally vital, and the root of all vitality, such as hath life in or of itself, and from whence it is propagated to every other living thing.”*

“It proceeds from their supine and drowsy ignorance, that they little know or think what prints and footsteps of a Deity they carry about them, in their bone and flesh, in every part and vein and limb.”†

“I should conceive these words in the Divine Dialogues [of the Platonist, Dr. Henry More,] as good an explication of the manner of God’s knowledge, as the case can admit (which yet is but the Scotists’ sense), ‘That the whole evolution of times and ages is so collectedly and presentificly represented to God at once, as if all things and actions which ever were, are, or shall be, were at this very instant, and so always really present and existent before him.’”‡

“The beauty of those truths it is most delightful to behold. Their lively, sparkling lustre, by which they appear so amiable and lovely to a well-tempered spirit, as to transport it with pleasure, and ravish it from itself into union with them. There was somewhat else apprehensible no doubt, and apprehended by them, the inward sentiments of whose souls those words so defectively served to express, ‘Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods, who is like thee, glorious in holiness,’ &c., besides the mere truth of any propositions that those words can be resolved into.”§

Pantheistic Language.

“But if we would take a nearer and more strict view of this parallel, we would state the general and more obvious aspect of this world on the one hand, and the external aspect and shape of a man on the other; and should then see the former doth evidence to us an indwelling Deity diffused through the whole, and actuating every part, with incomparably greater certainty than the latter doth an indwelling, reasonable soul.”**

“Take this whole created universe, and it is but a shadow in comparison of ‘I AM.’ That Being that claims to itself the name of ‘I AM,’ and there is nothing besides ‘ME’; nothing fit to be called being besides my own; for all made being is but at will and pleasure, raised up by a breath, and capable of being reduced to nothing by a breath.”††

Rash Speculation.

“Inasmuch as justice, in the common and most general notion of it, is ever wont to be reckoned conversant about the good of others,

* Living Temple, Part I., chap. ii. † Ibid., chap. iii. ‡ Ibid., chap. vi. § Of Delighting in God, Part I. ** Living Temple, Part I., chap. v. †† Principles of the Oracles of God, Part I., Lecture V.

even that whereto they have a right; it seems not intelligible, how justice, according to this usual notion of it, could primarily oblige God to inflict deserved punishment upon transgressors, if he had not settled a legal constitution to this purpose, and declared that should be the measure of his proceedings herein; both because it is so little conceivable how the punishments of the other state (which we are chiefly to consider) can be a good to them who do not suffer them (as we are sure they can be none to them that do), and also that it is not to be understood how, if they were, they could otherwise have any right thereto, than by that constitution by which (as, before, God's dominion was that of an absolute, sovereign Lord) he now undertakes the part of a governor, ruling according to known and established laws. ——— It being evident that it is that which justice doth require, to punish sin, according to such a constitution once made; yet, all this while, how the constitution was any necessary effect of justice, appears not. ——— But now with the Supreme Proprietor, there cannot but be unalienable rights, inseparably and everlastingly inherent in him: for it cannot be, but that He that is The Fountain of all rights, must have them primarily and originally in himself; and can no more so quit them, as to make the creature absolute and independent, than he can make the creature God. Wherefore, though with man there can be no such thing as justice towards one's self, disabling him to forego his own rights, the case cannot but be quite otherwise as to God, and for the same reason for which it cannot agree to man; because man hath none but borrowed and alienable rights, which he can forego to his own prejudice, and God hath none that he can so part with. Hereupon, therefore, God did owe it to himself, *primarily*, as the absolute Sovereign and Lord of all, not to suffer indignities to be offered to him, without animadverting upon them, and therefore to determine he would do so.”*

Specially Objectionable Passages.

“CREEDS.—Such schemes or collections of doctrines, reduced into an order, (as gold formed into a vessel, whereas truth, as it lies in the Holy Scriptures, is as gold in the mass,) may be of use (as they have always been used in the church in all ages) more distinctly to inform others concerning our sentiments, (though the use is less, that after thorough research and inquiry they can be of to oneself,) provided they be avowed to be looked upon but as a *mensura mensurata*, reserving unto the Scriptures the honour of being the only *mensura mensurans*; and so that we only own them as agreeable to the Scriptures. And again, that we declare we take them to be agreeable

* Living Temple, Part II., chap. vii.

thereto in the main, or for substance, without attributing a sacredness to the very words of a mere human composition; which indeed we cannot attribute to the words used in the translation of the Bible itself.”*

“THE CHURCH.—There ought certainly to be a very great deference given to usages in the Christian church in the purer and primitive times of it, when Christianity was most of all itself.”†

Subtile Reasoning.

“For do but consider, what if you had but a large phial capable of as great a quantity as you can think needful, of very fine particles, and, replenished with them, closely stopped, and well luted; suppose these as pure and fit for the purpose as you can imagine, only not yet rational; will their faring to and fro, through very close and stanch tubes, from one such receptacle to another, make them at last become so? It seems then, do what you will with them, toss and tumble them hither and thither, rack them from vessel to vessel, try what method you can devise of sublimation or improvement, every thing looks like a vain and hopeless essay. For indeed, do what you please or can think of, they are such immutable entities, you can never make them less, or finer, than they originally were: and rational they were not, before their meeting in the body; wherefore it were a strange wonder, if that should so far alter the case with them, that they should become rational by it.”‡

“If you let this be the proposition, That the absolutely-perfect Being is the self-existent Being—it is most obvious to every one, that the very notion of an absolutely-perfect Being carries necessity of existence, or self-existence in it: which the notion of nothing else doth.”§

Un-English Jargon.

“And as to the unity, or onliness rather, of this Being, or of the Godhead, the deduction thereof seems plain and easy from what hath been already proved; that is, from the absolute perfection thereof.”**

“If he did not comprehend within his own being simply all perfection; if there were many gods and worlds besides, and he only the Creator and absolute Lord of our vortex, were not that enough to entitle him to all the obedience and service we could give him?”††

“Here is some gradual refection of the veiled *arcana* of the Divine Being.”‡‡

* Preface to Carnality of Religious Contention. † Principles of the Oracles of God, Lecture I. ‡ Living Temple, Part I., chap. iii. § Ibid., Part II., chap. i.

** Ibid., Part I., chap. iv. †† Ibid., Part I., chap. vi. ‡‡ Ibid., Part II., chap. viii.

"There is a mutual in-being of the sacred Persons in the Godhead."*

"Supposing 'thy likeness' to signify, in any part, the *objective* glory saints are to behold ; it is very capable of being extended so far, as to take in a *sensible* appearance of glory also."†

"Pure intuition of God without any mixture of reasoning, is acknowledged (by such as are apt enough to be over-ascribing to the creature) peculiar to God alone."‡

"If [vision] most aptly signifies the great facility of this knowledge [of God by saints in heaven], that it is not toilsome, there is nothing like labour in it, 'tis not such as requires great pains ; it is but intuition, not a cautious, wary ratiocination, wherein we use to be very solicitous, lest we draw any irregular or untrue consequences."§

Decided Heresy.

"ON HUMAN NATURE.—Besides what he hath so expressly testified concerning his own nature, his favourable inclinations towards men might sufficiently be collected from that very nature which he hath given to man, considered in comparison and reference to his own ; that he made him in his own image ; and that he being the Father of spirits, hath placed a spirit in man, so agreeable to his own spiritual nature ; and by his own inspiration given him that understanding, that the mind begotten corresponds, by its most natural frame and constitution, to the mind that begot, the Fatherly Mind (as it was anciently called [he means by the philosophers]), *his own Eternal Mind* ; and that if its own original be remembered, it turns itself towards him, seeks his acquaintance by an instinct he hath himself implanted in it, and cannot rest till he have such a temple erected in it, where both he and it may cohabit together."***

With all his fondness for philosophers, he will not allow them to lower human nature too much, without rebuke.

"So that some of the ethnick philosophers have been so far from denying a corruption and depravation of nature in man, that they have overstrained the matter, and thought vicious inclination more deeply natural than indeed it is ; and so taxed and blamed nature, in the case of man, as to be too liable to implied reflections even on the blessed Author of nature himself."††

"[The image of God is] an image connatural to the spirit of man. Not a thing alien, and foreign to his nature, put into him purposely, as it were, to torment and vex him ; but an ancient, well-known inhabitant, that had place in him from the beginning. Sin is the

* Living Temple, Part I., chap. ix. † Blessedness of the Righteous, chap. iii.
‡ Ibid. § Heaven a State of Perfection,—Sermon. ** Living Temple, Part II., chap. iii. †† Ibid., chap. iv.

impious intruder; which therefore puts the soul into a commotion, and permits it not to rest, while it hath any being there.”*

“The effect produced which in John iii. 6, is called by the name of the spirit, is not a distinct subject from the spirit of a man, or another substance diverse; for then a regenerate person and an unregenerate, the same person in his unregenerate and in his regenerate state, would substantially differ from himself; and that you may easily apprehend how absurd it would be.”†

“CONVERSION.—They are themselves to come as lively stones, to the living Corner-stone, by a vital act of their own will.”‡

“THE END OF CHRISTIANITY.—The end and design of the gospel-revelation, of whole Christianity (I mean systematically considered), of all evangelical doctrines and knowledge, is to restore God’s likeness and image; from whence joy and peace result of course, when once the Gospel is believed. The Gospel is the instrument of impressing God’s likeness, in order whereunto it must be understood and received into the mind.”§

“THE ATONEMENT.—How deeply is it to be resented, and so momentous a thing in the religion of Christians, and that above all others should be the subject and incentive of admiring, devout thoughts and affections, should ever have been made intricate and perplexed by disputation! That the food of life should have been filled with thorns and gravel! And what was most apt to beget good blood, and turn all to strength, vigour and spirit, should be rendered the matter of a disease! This can never enough be taken to heart. What complaints might the tortured, famished Church of Christ send up against the ill instruments of so great a mischief! ‘Lord! we asked bread, and they gave us a stone. They have spoiled the provisions of thy house. Our pleasantest fare, most delicious and strengthening viands, they have made tasteless and unsavoury.’ What expostulations might it use with them! ‘Will you not let us live? Can nothing in our religion be so sacred, so important, as to escape your perverting hands?’”**

“THE TEARS OF JESUS.—They signify the sincerity of his love and pity, the truth and tenderness of his compassion. Canst thou think his deceitful tears? his, who never knew guile? was this like the rest of his course? And remember that he who shed tears, did, from the same fountain of love and mercy, shed blood too! Was that also done to deceive? Thou makest thyself some very considerable thing indeed, if thou thinkest the Son of God counted it worth his while to weep, and bleed, and die, to deceive thee into a false esteem of him and his love. But if it be the greatest madness imaginable to enter-

* Blessedness of the Righteous, chap. vii. † The Work of the Holy Spirit, Sermon I. ‡ Living Temple, Part II., chap. v. § Blessedness of the Righteous, chap. ix. ** Living Temple, Part II., chap. vi.

tain any such thought, but that his tears were sincere and inartificial, the natural expressions of undissembled benignity and pity, thou art then to consider what love and compassion thou art now sinning against; what bowels thou spurnest; and what if thou perishest, 'tis under such guilt as the devils themselves are not liable to, who never had a Redeemer bleeding for them, nor, that we ever find, weeping over them."*

"DIVERS MANNERS OF REVELATION.—These Scriptures were inspired from heaven, by God himself, or are of divine authority; which is the import of this assertion, as to the way of God's communicating his mind to those that delivered them. The expression (given by inspiration of God) is large and extensive enough to comprehend any, wherein there might be a certain signification of the Divine will; whether he did communicate it by voice (as he did divers things we find upon record in Scripture) or whether it was by dream, or by vision, to the penmen, that is, asleep or waking; or whether it were (as the Jews distinguish) by immediate irradiation of the intellect, the understanding faculty; or whether it were by impression or signature upon the imagination or fancy, as a thing intervening between the Divine mind and the intellect: which way soever it was, the expression will reach it. It was of divine authority; it proceeded from him, be it one or the other of these ways."†

"EVIDENCE OF REVELATION.—It is true, there wants not rational evidence to demonstrate the divine authority or divinity of this book to any that shall at leisure impartially consider the thing. But it is a far more lively proof than any one hath of this in himself and in his own soul, when he is made to taste, in the word, how gracious the Lord is, when he hath the pleasant relish of it in his own spirit: when he can say by his own experience, 'Oh, how sweet are thy words to my mouth, yea sweeter than honey to my taste!'"‡

"LOOSE NOTION.—As if everything were false, which Moses and Paul did not say."§

Vain Rhetoric.

"For let us but suppose (what no man can pretend is more impossible, and what any man must confess is less considerable, than what our eyes daily see) that in some part of the air near this earth, and within such limits as that the whole scene might be conveniently beheld at one view, there should suddenly appear a little globe of pure flaming light resembling that of the sun; and suppose it fixed as a centre to another body, or moving about that other as its centre (as

* Redeemer's Tears. † Principles of the Oracles of God, Lecture VII. ‡ Ibid., Lecture IX. § Living Temple, Part II., chap. ii.

this or that hypothesis best pleases us), which we could plainly see to be a proportionally-little earth, beautified with little trees and woods, flowery fields, and flowing rivulets with larger lakes into which these discharge themselves; and suppose we the other planets all of proportional bigness to the narrow limits assigned them, placed at their due distances, and playing about this supposed earth or sun, so as to measure their shorter and soon absolved days, months, and years, or two, twelve, or thirty years, according to their supposed lesser circuits;—would they not presently, and with great amazement confess an intelligent contriver and maker of this whole frame, above a Posidonius or any mortal? And have we not in the present frame of things a demonstration of wisdom and counsel, as far exceeding that which is now supposed, as the making some toy or bauble to please a child is less an argument of wisdom than the contrivance of somewhat that is of apparent and universal use”?*

“What would we think of such an appearance of God as that was upon mount Sinai, when he came down (or caused a sensible glory to descend) in the sight of all that great people; wherein the several things concurred that were above mentioned? Let us but suppose such an appearance, in all the concurrent circumstances of it, as that is said to have been. That is, we will suppose an equally great assembly or multitude of people is gathered together, and solemn forewarning is given and proclaimed among them, by appointed heralds or officers of state, that, on such a prefixed day, now very nigh at hand, the divine majesty and glory (even his glory set in majesty) will visibly appear, and show itself to them. They are most severely enjoined to prepare themselves, and be in readiness against that day. Great care is taken to sanctify people, and the place; bounds are set about the designed theatre for this great appearance: all are strictly required to observe their due and awful distances, and abstain from more audacious approaches and gazings; lest that terrible glory break out upon them and they perish: an irreverent or disrespectful look, they are told, will be mortal to them, or a very touch of any part of this sacred enclosure. In the morning of the appointed day, there are thunders, and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the hallowed mount. The exceeding loud sound of trumpet proclaims the Lord’s descent. He descends in fire, the flames whereof envelop the trembling mount (now floored with a sapphire pavement, clear as the body of heaven), and ascend into the middle region, or, as it is exprest, into the midst or heart of the heavens. The voice of words a (loud and dreadful voice), audible to all that mighty assembly, in which were six hundred thousand men, (probably more than a million of persons,) issues forth from amidst that terrible glory, pronouncing to

* Living Temple, Part I., chap. iii.

them that *I am Jehovah thy God*. And thence proceeding to give them precepts so plain and clear, so comprehensible and full, so unexceptionably just and righteous, so agreeable to the nature of man, and subservient to his good, that nothing could be more worthy the great Creator, or more aptly suitable to such a sort of creatures.*

“The stately ruins are visible to every eye, that bear in their front (yet extant) this doleful inscription—HERE GOD ONCE DWELT. Enough appears of the admirable frame and structure of the soul of man, to shew the divine presence did sometimes reside in it; more than enough of vicious deformity, to proclaim he is now retired and gone. The lamps are extinct, the altar overturned; the light and love are now vanished, which did the one shine with so heavenly brightness, the other burn with so pious fervour; the golden candlestick is displaced, and thrown away as a useless thing, to make room for the throne of the prince of darkness; the sacred incense, which sent rolling up in clouds its rich perfumes, is exchanged for a poisonous, hellish vapour, and here is, ‘instead of a sweet savour, a stench.’ The comely order of this house is all turned into confusion; ‘the beauties of holiness’ into noisome impurities; the ‘house of prayer to a den of thieves,’ and that the worst and most horrid kind; for every lust is a thief, and every theft sacrilege: continual rapine and robbery is committed upon holy things. The noble powers which were designed and dedicated to divine contemplation and delight, are alienated to the service of the most despicable idols, and employed unto vilest intuitions and embraces; to behold and admire lying vanities, to indulge and cherish lust and wickedness. What have not the enemies done wickedly in the sanctuary? How have they broken down the carved work thereof, and that too with axes and hammers, the noise whereof was not to be heard in building, much less in the demolishing this sacred frame! Look upon the fragments of that curious sculpture which once adorned the palace of that great king; the relics of common notions; the lively prints of some undefaced truth; the fair ideas of things; the yet legible precepts that relate to practice. Behold! with what accuracy the broken pieces show these to have been engraven by the finger of God, and how they now lie torn and scattered, one in this dark corner, another in that, buried in heaps of dirt and rubbish! There is not now a system, an entire table of coherent truths to be found, or a frame of holiness, but some shivered parcels. And if any, with great toil and labour, apply themselves to draw out here one piece, and there another, and set them together, they serve rather to show how exquisite the divine workmanship was in the original composition, than for present use to the excellent purposes for which the whole was first designed. Some

* Living Temple, Part I., chap. v.

pieces agree, and own one another; but how soon are our inquiries and endeavours nonplussed and superseded! How many attempts have been made, since that fearful fall and ruin of this fabric, to compose again the truths of so many several kinds into their distinct orders, and make up frames of science, or useful knowledge; and after so many ages, nothing is finished in any one kind! Sometimes truths are misplaced, and what belongs to one kind is transferred to another, where it will not fitly match: sometimes falsehood inserted, which shatters and disturbs the whole frame. And what is with much fruitless pains done by one hand, is dashed in pieces by another; and it is the work of a following age to sweep away the fine-spun cobwebs of a former. And those truths which are of greatest use, though not most out of sight, are least regarded: their tendency and design are overlooked or they are so loosened and torn off, that they cannot be wrought in, so as to take hold of the soul, but hover as faint, ineffectual notions, that signify nothing. Its very fundamental powers are shaken and disjointed, and their order towards one another confounded and broken: so that what is judged considerable is not considered, what is recommended as eligible and lovely is not loved and chosen. Yea, the truth which is after godliness is not so much disbelieved, as hated, held in unrighteousness; and shines as too feeble a light in that malignant darkness which comprehends it not. You come amidst all this confusion, as into the ruined palace of some great prince, in which you see here the fragments of a noble pillar, there the shattered pieces of some curious imagery, and all lying neglected and useless among heaps of dirt. He that invites you to take a view of the soul of man gives you but such another prospect, and doth but say to you,—‘Behold the desolation’;—all things rude and waste. So that should there be any pretence to the divine presence, it might be said, If God be here, why is it thus? The faded glory, the darkness, the disorder, the impurity, the decayed state in all respects of this temple, too plainly shew the great inhabitant is gone.”*

So long as all this is allowed to repose in the writings of John Howe, it is recognized and revered as orthodox. But woe to the rash youth who would bring it forth! He soon learns that what is sound for an old folio may be unsound for a new pamphlet; that it requires just two centuries to effect the change. Were John Howe himself a young divine of the present day, the above would probably

* Living Temple, Part II., chap. iv.

be the style of quotation and description in one of our "evangelical" reviews; and Sir Oracle may be imagined as winding up in some such fashion as this :—"How lamentable that one who has the Bible open before him should be seduced by philosophy thus to mar the simplicity of the Gospel, to depart from 'the faith once delivered to the saints'! How still more lamentable that such a one should yet wear the Christian profession, and even pretend to the instruction of others! Let us hope that our young friend, for whom, with all his vagaries, we have a sincere respect—since he certainly is capable of better things—will reconsider the matter, and retract in time, and that meanwhile so sad an example will not prove contagious. Far be the day when doctrines such as these will be taught from the pulpits of our beloved native land!"

LITERARY NOTICES.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the Author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE ANNOTATED PARAGRAPH BIBLE. Vol. I. The Religious Tract Society.

A COMPANION TO THE AUTHORIZED VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. By the Rev. HILKIAH BEDFORD HALL, M.A. London: Bell and Daldy, Fleet Street.

THE journey which Robert Stephens, the printer, performed on horse-back from Paris to Lyons, in 1548, was an unpropitious one to the readers of the Bible; for it was then that he jotted down the miserable divisions of the New Testament into verses, which have been in use in England ever since the Geneva Bible of 1560, and have proved a

stumbling-block and a snare to the English reader. The chapters had been formed previously by Cardinal Hugo; and the divisions of both sorts, larger and smaller, in the Old Testament, are of much greater antiquity. The Bible might have been divided into chapters in such a way as to assist the reader, and the notation even of verses—which might have been done in the margin—was indispensable for the purpose of reference. But the present divisions, of both sorts, are carelessly and execrably made, and whoso wishes to understand what he reads soon finds it necessary to ignore them altogether. When they are ignored in the printing, or only retained in the margin, and in their stead natural divisions are introduced of sections and paragraphs according to the sense, which is the case in this “Paragraph Bible,” the stumbling-block is removed, the snare is broken, and the reader receives efficient help instead of hindrance.

This is also an “Annotated Bible,” and the annotations are truly valuable and meritorious. The error, by which those who consult commentaries are so often tantalized, of common-place remarks on passages which present no difficulty, while real difficulties are past over, is here avoided, as well as that of perplexing you with a number of conflicting opinions drawn from various exegetes. Scarcely a perplexing passage is left in the “Annotated Bible” without an attempt, at least, at solution, which is well worthy of consideration; generally the perplexity is entirely removed, light is thrown on many places which have been immemorably and hopelessly unintelligible to the unlearned, and beautiful and deep meanings are disclosed where before was profitless vacuity. Certainly the notes have various degrees of merit, nor can we always agree with the interpretation that is offered; but they are evidently the result of conscientious and laborious scholarship. Every book is furnished with an excellent introduction. There are carefully-constructed historical and chronological tables, and neat maps. The references are not printed in a manner the most agreeable to the eye, or most facile for use, and they are, in our opinion, too numerous. Half the number of judiciously-selected references, printed in a clear type, would have been preferable. But on the whole, this is decidedly the best commentary for the English reader. It is one which many a minister would find serviceable in preparation for the pulpit, affording, as it does, the result of much learned investigation and judicious deliberation, ready to his hand. The Tract Society had rendered good service by their former two “Paragraph Bibles,” but this large and handsome annotated edition far transcends the others. We cordially thank them for the boon, and earnestly recommend the work to our readers, ministerial and lay.

“A Companion to the Authorized Version of the New Testament” is a small but remarkable book. The author is an Irish clergyman of

the Whately school. His plan is to go through the New Testament, observing the injuries that have arisen from misapprehension of the original, from the want of uniformity in the choice of words, from the use of words now become obsolete, from inattention to the Greek article, from the influence of the Vulgate, and lastly from the insertion of words which have no equivalents in the original, and a few instances of bad grammar and misprinting. The task is performed with learning, care, and fidelity; and although, of course, we do not pledge ourselves to agreement with all the dicta of the volume, we think it should be a manual with every student until he has become thoroughly familiar with its contents.

THE WILL DIVINE AND HUMAN. By THOMAS SOLLY. Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, and Co.

A FEW men, here and there, have a mental constitution so peculiar, that they are constantly urged by the obtrusive intellect to seek the bottom of every subject which offers. They are conscious of an inner uneasiness until this impulse is obeyed. They are unable to display much warmth of feeling until its propriety has been established on speculative grounds. The heart with them is cold until the head is satisfied; but when this is effected, the whole man glows with enthusiasm. Such brain-led men will exult in the book before us. They will find it more absorbing than a novel, more delightful than a romance. The great question of the will, and of its liberty, so favourite with philosophers of all ages, is here treated by the hand of a master. Mr. Solly is acquainted with the speculations of previous inquirers; but, being an original thinker, he does not implicitly follow any of them. He diverges widely from Locke, Priestley, Edwards; breaks a lance with Leibnitz, and another with Reid;—and whilst his style of thought is considerably Kantian, he finally propounds a doctrine which appears to us to be nearer the truth than that of Kant, and which bears the family likeness of Cudworth. To set forth that doctrine would require more room than we can spare; and if we wished to get a clue, it would be difficult to construct a sentence or two without the risk of misleading. The author regards the world as continually sustained by the Power which at first put it forth—as “the maintained manifestation of Divine energy.” He finds liberty in a self-determination of the will, in harmony with the moral law—with the will of God. The scheme of nature, and of man’s life, so far as involved therein, have been predetermined by God, who has a perfect foreknowledge of the self-determination of every

man, and appoints him a place and a work accordingly. "The human will is the last thing in the human soul, the Divine will is the last thing in the Divine mind." In several discussions he employs mathematical formulæ, which, without confounding the methods of distinct sciences, are conducive to clearness and precision. The work is divided into two books: the former treating of the Human Will in relation to Nature, to the Intellect, and to God; and the latter of the Divine Will, under the heads of—the Divine Government of the Universe, and the Divine Will as the Ultimate Principle in the Divine Character.

HELPS TO TRUTH-SEEKERS; or, Christianity and Scepticism. By the Rev. JOSEPH PARKER, Banbury. London: Judd and Glass.

THE CHRISTIAN COSMOS. The Son of God the Revealed Creator. By EDWARD WILLIAM GRINFIELD, M.A. London: Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday.

CHRIST, THE CHRISTIAN'S GOD AND SAVIOUR. By the late Rev. JAMES SPENCE, M.A. London: Ward and Co.

SUCH a book as Mr. Parker's was a desideratum. It is intended for an important class, and is well adapted for its end. Many young men are exposed to the assaults of coarse infidelity, in conversation, lectures, portable and cheap literature, who have neither access to large and expensive works on the evidences, nor time to read them, nor the mental habit requisite to appreciate them. Though Mr. Parker has not written for the more refined and subtle doubters, yet the others, who are more numerous, might be saved, some from great unrest, and others from decided infidelity, by his book. It is written with clearness and fervour, and often rises to an eloquence having "the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning."

The subject of the excellent work whose title stands second on our list is not what we at first supposed, The word *Cosmos* being significant of order and beauty, and being usually applied to the present condition of the world as distinguished from *Chaos*, we thought that this book treated of the order and beauty of the spiritual world consequent on redemption, and as distinguished from the chaos and confusion produced by sin. But the author's idea is, that the *Cosmos* is the work of Christ. Christ is the Creator; and the *Cosmos*, thus conceived of—as distinguished from the deistic or pantheistic conception of the world as the work of a mere Supreme Being, or as identified with the Deity—he terms the Christian *Cosmos*. To

sustain this sublime theory, and show its relations to the other parts of Christian truth, he collects and expounds testimonies, first from the New Testament and then from the Old. He shows that it was the doctrine of the early church, and has been of the more profound of the English divines. He then further establishes the doctrine by manifold discussion, and expounds its relations to natural and Christian theology, to the wide field of truth, and to missionary enterprise; with just lamentation over the general neglect into which the doctrine—which still receives formal recognition—has fallen. We earnestly commend this remarkable book to the study of thoughtful men, especially of ministers of Christ.

The author of "Christ the Christian's God and Saviour," was a divine of the school of Wardlaw. The work is in four parts:—i. The Witness of Christ—the Holy Scriptures;—ii. The Person of Christ—God-Man;—iii. The Work of Christ;—iv. The Claims of Christ, or the Duties we owe Him. The design was to present the arguments of Wardlaw and Pye Smith in a volume accessible to the majority.

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE IN ITS SEVERAL PARTS AND STAGES. By the Rev. J. LEIFCHILD, D.D. Second Edition. London: Ward and Co.

ON PREACHING AND PREACHERS, &c. By the Rev. J. LEIFCHILD, D.D. Ward and Co.

In these two little works, the venerable author has given a memorial of himself and his labours to two classes of Christians, the private and the ministerial. In the first, which consists of a series of eleven discourses, he presents, at parting, the people among whom he long laboured, with a specimen of the substance and manner of his teaching, which, while it will doubtless be especially prized by them for whom it was immediately intended, is well fitted for general usefulness. In the other he makes a valuable contribution to a class of books not too numerous, but highly important; and gives to his young brethren in the ministry a body of affectionate and wise counsels, the fruit of his own long and varied experience. Thoughts on preaching, by one who has laboured so long and so well, might be expected to be particularly noteworthy; and we assure preachers, young and middle-aged, that they could hardly fail of profit and pleasure, from communion with Father Leifchild, during the short half-hour required for the perusal of the Inaugural Address and the Appendix.

GLIMPSES OF PROPHET LIFE. Lessons from the History of Jonah. By the Rev. ADAM STUART MUIR. Second Edition. Edinburgh : Shepherd and Elliott.

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA. By the Rev. ROBERT MAGUIRE, M.A. London : Knight and Son.

WE fear that the congregation to whom the substance of the first book was originally delivered must have imagined Prophet Life to have been rather dull, if it at all resembled some afternoon sermons on the subject.

"The Seven Churches of Asia" consists of a series of lecture-like sections, whose aim it is, in a spirit of wise love, to draw practical lessons from the addresses to the churches in the Revelation, and to carry them to the conscience,—and in this aim they are fitted to succeed.

DR. LIVINGSTON : His Life and Adventures in the Interior of South Africa. By H. G. ADAMS. London : Houlston and Wright.

THE historian will write of Dr. Livingston's travels as equalling in importance any event of our age. The more they are considered, the greater does their import appear, for the nations of Southern Africa, for ourselves, for the interests of civilization, commerce, general humanity, and for the Christian religion. The fact itself, that an unarmed Christian teacher passed through such a length of savage territory, not only uninjured, but even receiving friendly hospitality, is most significant to the philosopher and the Christian. Mr. Adams's volume is just the thing—clear and simple narrative, satisfying the man, fascinating the boy. We understand that a larger and more costly volume, comprising Dr. Livingston's Journals, is shortly to make its appearance. But that need not disparage the present work. Each of the books will have its use, find its readers, and do its work.

INDEPENDENCY IN WARWICKSHIRE; A Brief History of the Independent or Congregational Churches in that County; &c. By JOHN SIBREE and M. CANTON. Coventry : G. and F. King. London : Ward and Co.

THE subject of this work is one of general interest to the Christian Church, and of special interest to the denomination concerned.

Independency, that remarkable manifestation of Christianity, which has already played so important a part in the history of our country, and which is destined to ever-growing prominence and influence, constitutes, when associated with the county of Warwick, situated in the heart of England, comprising a large tract of country, and several populous towns, a considerable subject for the historic pen. Such a matter demands from the writer toil in research, and faithfulness, simplicity, and impartiality, in report. For the adequate fulfilment of such a task, we should have thought no man in the county better fitted than Mr. Sibree, who—notwithstanding the association of another name with his on the title-page—is evidently the Editor on whom rests the chief responsibility of this book. He deserves thanks for laborious collection of materials, and for many very interesting facts, which are narrated in the course of the work. The style, however, and the general treatment are capable of improvement. We are not supposed to possess that information respecting local details which is requisite for the expression of an opinion.

MEMORIALS OF A GOOD MAN'S LIFE. Sketches from the Life of the late Rev. WILLIAM REID, Collessie. By ALICE MAXTONE. Dundee: William Middleton.—The subject of this Memoir seems to have been truly estimable as a Christian and as a minister, but men of much greater mark have lived and died, whose memoirs have never been written. The author is warm-hearted, and has a pious aim, but her book is written in a style which we cannot commend. It is full of pious conventionalisms, and of sentimentalism. Some of the sentences are so misty as to provoke a smile.—THE OBJECT OF LIFE. The Religious Tract Society.—This little book has been written with good intentions; and if it would hardly bear to be tried by a very high standard of either religion or art, it is certainly far superior to many of the class to which it belongs. The spirit of some passages is hardly evangelical enough for our standard, the plot is unskilful, and the style is at times rather sickly. We are inclined, however, to speak favourably of the book, since there is in it a mingling of much which is good. There are marks, we think, of a mind struggling to escape from the clinging disadvantages of a mistaken early moral training, like Milton's lion

“————— pawing to get free
His hinder parts.”

There is much wisdom, much godliness, and much beauty in the book.—RELIGION IN EARNEST. Tales Illustrative of Christian Life

in Germany. Translated from the German by Mrs. STANLEY CARR, with Prefatory Notice by Rev. WILLIAM HANNA, LL.D. Edinburgh: Shepherd and Elliott.—Here are three tales from the German, the production of Victor—not David—Strauss. They are interesting as illustrative of the re-action which for some time has been taking place in Germany, in favour of Scriptural Christianity, after a long season of distracting, confusing speculation, and the unrest of harassing doubt. In this work there are hopeful signs that the painful discipline through which the German church has past, will now lead to a healthier, more sagacious, and more lively orthodoxy. In some few expressions the author seems to us to have rashly approached the pietistic extreme, and, in his desire to be thoroughly evangelical, to have unduly depreciated that reason which is “the candle of the LORD.” But this is what might have been expected. These tales are evidently the work of a man, who, in acquaintance with the various phases of German life, religious and social, in imaginative and descriptive faculty, and general literary skill, is thoroughly competent to the task which he has proposed to himself; and the translation, in faithful representation of the original by idiomatic English, leaves nothing to be desired.—THE MADEIRA PERSECUTIONS. By the Rev. CARUS WILSON, M.A. The Religious Tract Society.—An interesting and doubtless faithful, narrative of a remarkable spiritual movement, and the persecution thereby excited. A permanent memorial of the same, in a convenient form, will be welcome to very many.—PASSAGES FROM THE SERMONS OF DR. ARNOLD. London: T. Fellowes, Ludgate Street.—With the exception of some references to confirmation and the like things, which have only a sectarian application, this selection has been made with judgment. We should like for the little volume to circulate by thousands, and to be read by Christians of every denomination. It is a vase of gold-dust.—THE ATONING LAMB: A Spiritual Exhibition and Enforcement of our Lord’s Vicarious Death. By Rev. W. GRIFFITHS. Ward and Co.—A series of five discourses on a topic than which none is more sacred, none more important. One chief object of the worthy writer is to oppose the limitation of the Atonement, which is still contended for in misty angles, and to exhibit its universal aspect, as taught in Scripture, and as necessarily involved in its principle.—THE EVANGELICAL REPOSITORY: A Quarterly Journal of Theological Literature. Vol. II. Glasgow: Lang, Adamson, and Co. We believe that this Quarterly is the organ of the theological party and religious body, named the Evangelical Union. There is much vigorous thought and earnest piety in its pages. We should like to see it work entirely free from barbarous scholasticisms in divinity, and deal with the Bible in the spirit of its writers—a spirit uncongenial with petty modern theological controversy, eschewing unprofitable metaphysics, plentifully endowed with common sense, wide as the world, one with

humanity.—AN ARGUMENT FOR THE LEGISLATIVE PROHIBITION OF THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC. By Dr. FREDERIC RICHARD LEES. Prize Essay. Second Edition. London: William Tweedie.—The scenes of vice and wretchedness which this book uncovers would surprise many, and cast a gloom over most. Yet the display is needful for the argument, which is conducted with ability, and calls for calm consideration.—THE POETICAL WORKS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT. With Memoir and Critical Dissertation, by the Rev. GEORGE GILFILLAN. Vol. I. Edinburgh: James Nichol.—Mr. Gilfillan's very serviceable series of the Poets has been so often noticed in the pages of the "Homilist," that we need only say, that the present volume comprises Scott's Lay of the Last Minstrel and Lady of the Lake, with an introductory memoir in the Editor's usual manner.—GONZAGA DI CAPPONI. A Dramatic Romance. By HENRY SOLLY. London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans.—The subject is an incident in Florentine history, which occurred in the fourteenth century, in connexion with the noted contentions of the Guelphs and Ghibelines. This has been treated with a lofty moral aim, and with considerable poetic ability. The poem is very pleasant reading, having tones of Robert Browning's and of Shakspeare's.—INDEPENDENCY. A Lecture on the Nature, Constitution, and Government of a Christian Church. By the Rev. H. P. BOWEN. Middlesbrough: James Martin.—FAITH TRIUMPHANT; or, the World Overcome. By JOSEPH ELISHA FREEMAN. Ward and Co.—EVENTS COMMON TO ALL, AND THINGS PECULIAR TO THE GOOD. A Sermon, &c. By the Rev. THOMAS HUGHES. Castle and Lamb.—Plain, practical discourses, likely to be useful to a numerous class, and suitable for circulation amongst them, by such as are in the laudable practice of giving away godly pamphlets. The first is a clear exposition of what the writer believes to be scriptural church principles.



A HOMILY

ON

Solitude Recommended to the Pastor.*

“And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.”—
Luke v. 16.

THERE is not in the history of the days of the Son of man a single detail without meaning ; all His actions afford us instruction, as do all His words ; and often from a circumstance which seems designed only to join together the facts of which the narrative is composed, there springs, for the attentive reader, some lesson of high importance. It is not without design that the Spirit of God, which guided the pen of the evangelists, has made them take notice of the various times when our Lord withdrew to the mountains and the wilderness. In seeing Him, whose holy soul was in essential and constant communion with the God of all holiness, separate Himself from the crowd to converse with His Father ;—in seeing Him, who was the truth itself, withdraw from the noise of the world to hear more closely the voice of the Spirit, we cannot doubt that the Christian also has need of the retirement and silence of which his Master himself felt the need ;—and we in particular, my brethren, cannot doubt that if the chief Shepherd so loved and sought for solitude, we, shepherds in His name, of the church which He has gathered, ought, like Him, to love and seek for solitude.

* Translated from the French of A. VINET. A Sermon preached before the Venerable Synod of Lausanne and Vevey.

This example of itself is sufficient ; but yet it cannot be without profit—let us say rather that it is necessary—TO CONSIDER FOR OURSELVES THE REASONS WHICH, INDEPENDENTLY OF THE AUTHORITY OF SUCH AN EXAMPLE, RECOMMEND SOLITUDE TO A MINISTER OF JESUS CHRIST. This, my beloved brethren, is what we are going to attempt ; and we may say, with truth, that the times in which we live, and the present forms of human life and of our ministry, increase for us the interest of a subject otherwise interesting at all times and in all churches. He who is about to speak, and who on this subject, as on all others, has much more to learn from you than he can teach you, feels himself very weak to treat it suitably. May he do it in a profitable manner ! and to this end ask God, with him, to watch over the thoughts of his heart, and the words of his mouth. Amen.

We may confine ourselves, in treating of this subject, to remarks of a very general kind, feeling sure that they will of themselves apply themselves to our holy profession.

I. THAT SOLITUDE IS NECESSARY, MORE OR LESS, FOR ALL MEN. Solitude is favourable to recollection (*recueillement*) ; and it is only on the condition of recollecting—that is to say, of entering into himself, and of isolating himself from all objects except one—that man is capable of putting forth (*deployer*) a certain power of thought and will. Every vigorous life is a deep life. This *recollection* is so much the more difficult as the greater number of objects solicit our attention, and the greater number of different impressions dispute for our soul. Everything which dissipates us, weakens us. Solitude, which separates us from these objects, and withdraws us from these impressions—which reduces to the smallest possible number the external causes of distraction—is useful, then, more or less, to all men. The strongest among them have acknowledged the value of it, and have sought opportunity for it. Its very abuse bears witness to its usefulness ; since the extremes which have been its consequences are all characterized by the influence of one

dominating thought, which gradually has made itself absolute mistress of the imagination, the soul, and the life. These examples lead us to think that the two opposite states, society and solitude, must concur in the full development of man: the former awakening his thoughts, and giving an object to his will; the latter completing what the other had sketched out, and elevating himself to a state of conviction, properly so called, and of firm volition.

II. IF SOLITUDE IS NECESSARY, MORE OR LESS, FOR ALL MEN, IT HAS A SPECIAL IMPORTANCE FOR THE RELIGIOUS MAN. Religion, in reality, does not consist altogether in the performance of certain outward acts, whether of worship or of morality. These acts, in themselves, are only a consequence or a manifestation of an inner life, which is the intercourse of the soul with the invisible Being. Things visible—which were destined by the Creator to serve us, in some degree, as a ladder towards the invisible, the outward world, all the objects and all the scenes of which ought to converse to us of God—have lost this influence over our souls, which sin has rendered blind and deaf. They rather exercise over us an influence quite opposite. They turn from God our thoughts and our affections; they incline them towards matter and vanity; they dethrone in our heart the immortal and infinite. They end by taking from us the taste and the relish for true good; so that, given up to outward impressions, we cease soon to receive those of the truth; and unless the inner life is very vigorously and carefully guarded, the soul, light and inflated with vanity, flies away on every gale of unlawful desire, of self-love, and of curiosity. How much, then, does religion, whose principal effort is to withdraw us from the impressions of the visible world, recommend to us retirement and solitude? “It is not good,” even in a religious point of view, “that man should be alone.” (Gen. ii. 18.) But it would be still less good for him to be never alone. By means of mingling among his fellow-men, one loses his individuality. He exchanges his peculiar character for the general character.

He thinks with the mind of others ; he ceases to be himself. But to become a Christian, it is necessary, first of all, to be oneself. We must belong to ourselves, in order that we may give ourselves to God. If we come to lose, in our intercourse with the world, that native form of our being which makes us ourselves, the truth, in visiting us, will seek in vain on what to lay hold ; and we who have little by little allowed the general soul to substitute itself for ours, shall have nothing left wherewith to feel truth, to recognize it, and to embrace it. My brethren, never was this danger greater than at the present day ; we meet it everywhere—in the Church as in the world ; everything conspires, even under the most sanctified appearances, to take us away from ourselves ; and we run the risk every moment of mistaking the voice of the century for the voice of the Spirit of God. I know not what insipid soul and fictitious life threaten constantly to take the place of our soul and of our life. I know not what magic force makes us receive as the frank inspiration of our own conscience, and defend with the warmth of conviction, systems and formulas which have been born without us from the conflict of ideas and the course of events. We observe, we imitate, we repeat, and we think that we are experiencing. Never should the wish of the prophet king find an echo in so many hearts as at the present day, Oh that one would give me the wings of a dove, I would fly away and place myself in some region. (Psalm lv. 7.) Let this vow be ours, my brethren : let us place ourselves in some region far from the noise and the dust of the world—far from its remembrances ; if it were possible, let us go to the research of ourselves ; let us find again this first man, this true man, under the thick layers of the opinions of sect, and of the spirit of the century ; let us arouse the voice within us ; let us collect religiously the monitions of our conscience ; yes, *religiously* ; for in this silence from the world, it is God Himself that we shall hear—it is God who will speak by the voice within us. “When I have drawn thee into the desert,” said God, by the prophet, “I will speak to thy heart.” (Hosea ii. 14.)

We do not think we shall be exaggerating in saying that those who do not love solitude do not love truth ; at least it is certain that those who do not love the truth do not love solitude. Why ? Because solitude obliges them, more or less, to re-enter into themselves, and because all their effort is to go out of themselves that they may not meet with the truth. For it is certain that everything which restores us to ourselves, restores us to the truth and to God ; because there is within us, in our innermost selves, something which bears continual witness for truth, and for God—something which laments and adores, which unites itself to the invisible and the immortal, which consents to the Gospel—something which, before and in spite of ourselves, is Christian. We have felt it in those remarkable moments, when all the noises of the world being silent, our relations with it suddenly interrupted, we find ourselves all at once face to face with ourselves. Thus, in the morning, when we begin, as afresh, to live and to think ; by night, when we awake ; and when according to the expression of the prophet “ our thoughts instruct us,” (Psalm xvi. 7.) in the silence of things without, the inner voice comes at length to make itself heard. It is a sound, sweet and penetrating, but more piercing than the noise of thunder ; it is a light breath, which, after the whirlwind, passes before the lips of the prophet, and makes the hair of his face bristle. A bandage falls from our eyes, our intoxication is dissipated ; everything has taken a new aspect as in a purer day ; we are astonished at our dreams of the former day ; we blush even from the depths of our souls for our enthusiasms and our angers—for our fears and our wishes. In these moments, alas ! too fugitive, and which still we shorten, nothing interposes between the truth and us, and if we wished to prolong them, to multiply them in our life, no doubt it would take gradually another form, another tenor. But on the contrary we hate these moments for the very light which they cast upon our spiritual state ; and because we hate them we flee from solitude which multiplies them ; we cast ourselves as a prey to our business and our fellow-

men ; we allow them to dispute and scramble for the miserable rags of ourselves ; and we taste the sad pleasure of being unclothed of God in being unclothed of ourselves.

It remains to be said, my brethen, we do not wish to forget it, that it is in the world that we are called to exercise our religion ; it is in the world, and by the dangers which we meet with there, that our religion strengthens and develops itself. Solitude, if it were prolonged, would injure our religion as much as intercourse with the outer world. It would be right that it should bring us injury, because it would be contrary to the intentions and to the order of God. He would not bless our disobedience, and His justice would visit our cowardice, vainly disguised under the name of prudence, with consequences yet more fatal than those which follow a life of agitation without repose. If demons infest the world, they pursue in the desert him whom obedience and charity should keep in the world ; if the world is a gathering-place of illusions, egotistical solitude is the region of phantoms. The illusion of illusions, the prime error is, to think oneself in safety, while forgetful of the most pressing duties. Besides, our Lord has laid down the rule when He said to his Father, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." (John xvii. 15.) Shall we dare to utter a different prayer—to frame a different wish—to follow different maxims? No, my brethen ; let us pray only to be preserved from evil ; but let us learn to renew in solitude—that is to say, in recollection, in meditation, and prayer—the strength which we have to employ against the world, and *in* the world.

III. IF SOLITUDE IS WHOLESOME FOR MEN IN GENERAL, AND MORE PARTICULARLY FOR CHRISTIANS, IT IS EVIDENT THAT IT IS WHOLESOME FOR THE PASTOR, WHO IS A MAN AND A CHRISTIAN IN THE FULLEST AND STRONGEST SENSE WHICH THOSE WORDS CAN BEAR. The work of the pastor, well conceived, is the chief of all human works, in its *principles*, in its *means*,

and in its *results*. In its principles—since it is a work of religion, and it is religion which gives to human life its highest and last signification. In its means—since it is by the better part of *ourselves* that we act upon the better part of others. In its results—since the conversion of a single soul is a resurrection from among the dead; and this glorious result, extended as far as it might be extended, would be the resurrection of humanity. This work is the most difficult of works as it is the grandest—the most complex in one sense, as it is the most simple in another. If it is accomplished often amidst great weakness of human means, that all glory may be given to God, it does not the less demand all that there is in us of patience, perseverance, knowledge, and genius. All is good for this work, because it has God for its Sustainer; but also nothing is too good because it has God for its object; and to estimate at its greatest value the genius of human works on the one hand, and on the other the genius of the apostleship, we shall find that, under every aspect, the second has the superiority over the first. The work of the pastor, then, amidst all human works, is the supreme work, and the pastor is the *man* par-excellence. If, then, solitude has great advantages for every man, in the double sphere of thought and action, it will bring very great advantages to the pastor as a *man* of thought and action.

But especially, my brethren, the pastor is a *Christian* par-excellence,—that is to say, he ought to be so. These words, if we pay attention to them, comprehend the exact definition of an evangelical ministry. The pastor, indeed, what is he but a special Christian—a Christian by office, engaged, as we all are, “to show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light”? (1 Peter ii. 9.) If you separate from his office the administration of public worship, which is only a form attached to his office, what does there remain except a duty which all Christians are called to fulfil according to their ability, and in conformity with their positions? What Christian is there who ought not, as far as he can, to instruct, to exhort, to comfort—

to bear witness, "to make his light shine before men," (Matt. v. 16.) "to be the salt of the earth," (Matt. v. 13.) to contribute according to his ability to the edification of that living temple which is the Church of the Lord? If every Christian is a minister, how much more, and in what an emphatic sense is every minister a Christian! How ought this "man of God" to render himself "furnished unto every good work!" (2 Tim. iii. 17.) How ought he "to take heed unto himself" (1 Tim. iv. 16.) as to "instruction" in order that his life and character may themselves furnish instruction! How ought he to be in all things "the ensample of the flock!" (1 Peter v. 3.) He is still more: he is the ensign, the standard of Christianity in the midst of the world. If the world judges of religion by its professors, how much more by its ministers! Ministers of the Gospel, you personify the Gospel. People do not rise higher, they confine themselves to observing you. A faithful pastor may cause to arise some favourable bias towards the Gospel, but much more surely an unfaithful pastor will inspire disgust for it,—and what a faithful pastor has of evil in him easily effaces all that he has of good. The severity of the world towards you is inexorable, its requirements boundless; it knows, almost to an atom, all that you ought to be, all that you ought to do. It is very wonderful this; but it is good, it is right, that it should be so. You may tremble in thinking of it, but you cannot complain of it. Either cease to be ministers, or be vigorously what is required of you to be—model Christians. Say to yourselves every day that it is this which you ought to be, and feel then that if the common Christian has an interest in securing, amidst the business of life, moments of retirement in the presence of God, you, not only as ministers, but also and especially as Christians, ought to love and seek for solitude.

IV. BECAUSE PASTORS HAVING FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES PECULIAR, SOLITUDE IS SPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR THEM.

First: *The pastor, more than any other, is called "to search*

and try his ways." (Lam. iii. 40.) In the path which he pursues he draws with him many souls. Moreover, every way is not evidently good or evidently evil. "There is a way that seemeth right which leads to death." (Prov. xiv. 12.) We may deceive ourselves as to the means, without being wrong in our aim, and the best intentions may lead to deplorable results. Upon the true foundation we may raise "a building of wood or stubble," which will be consumed; or a building of marble or of gold, which will last. In the conflagration of the former, the architect "himself may be saved, yet so as by fire"; (1 Cor. iii.) but what desolation, what a mournful trial of faith will it be to contemplate these lamentable ruins; to be present at the time, and still later to be present in memory at the ruin of so many precious souls, and to think that not one of them will follow us before the throne of the father! Ah! the divine Father knows the secret of consoling in the heart of a faithful minister so bitter a grief. But what a grief!—until that it is swallowed up in the inconceivable happiness of heaven; and what a remembrance to carry with us even to the tomb! Besides, our intentions themselves are not always proper; we may think ourselves sincere and faithful, and yet not be so: and to have no misgivings on the subject, to be always ignorant of it, it only requires that we shall march on continually without ever taking breath, without ever looking behind. The prudent and conscientious minister fears the bewilderment of a ceaseless activity; he has need to examine himself on his motives—he mistrusts the very warmth of his zeal; and the more he feels himself united to his work, the more he asks himself with disquietude, whether he is loving his work for itself, or whether it is himself that he is loving in his work. The short reflections which he intermixes with his works scarcely ever finishing themselves, and leaving only in his spirit uncertain and trembling impressions, he dares not trust himself to visions so fugitive; and whatever be the coolness of his head, and the ordinary certainty of his good sense in the things of life, he does not trust himself to them entirely,

knowing that in interests so grave, and in questions so delicate, the ordinary guarantees are not sufficient, and that natural good sense does not always preserve us from enormous errors. And this examination of our ways—this severe control of our means and motives—this serious criticism of our entire work, what trouble shall we not have in acquitting ourselves of it if we refuse to ourselves some moments of solitude !

Secondly : *The pastor especially requires experience.* We speak, my brethren, of experience as a great advantage, and we are right—for thought, which gives much fore-knowledge, does not make us divine everything. But it is wrong to suppose that experience consists in the mere actions in which one has taken part, or at which one has been present, and to measure it merely by years. Age by itself alone does not constitute experience, and we may have lived long without having lived much. Every one sees, but every one does not observe. Experience is not merely a fact, it is an action ; it is the events of our life illuminated by reflection,—or if you prefer the expression, it is reflection joining itself to events to give them their signification and attach to them their consequences. We have had much experience only when we have had much reflection. How then can we doubt that experience commenced, so to speak, in the outer world, is finished and consummated in solitude ? How many germs which life furnishes are dissipated and lost for want of a moment to collect them ! how many germs are preserved and made productive ! how much future is there in a single hour devoted to meditation on a single event !

Thirdly : *The pastor especially requires spiritual strength.* The word of God is the herbage, savoury and sweet, on which you have to feed your flocks ; but your strength as pastors, is to feed yourselves also upon it, for your health is the life of your flock. But it would be wearisome, be well assured of it, oftentimes to read this word only in presence of, or with regard to, your flocks. There ever remains, I wish to believe it, some good thing to ourselves, from a study

which we have made for our Church ; but never anything so intimately as from a study made for ourselves immediately. Our salvation, it is very necessary to remind ourselves, does not accomplish itself all at the same time with that of others—our salvation is not built upon theirs ; we are pastors of our own souls ; we form part of our own parishes, and it is to ourselves that our first cares are due. To be ever seeking in the Bible subjects of meditation and texts for sermons is not sufficient for us, nor even for our flocks, who cannot but lose by what we lose ourselves. It is necessary for us to learn—yes, to *learn*—to read the Bible not as preachers, but as simple believers. And what refreshment it brings to the minister to read it thus, without always attaching to it the ideas of task and office—to read in long extracts, to wander freely through those rich and fertile plains, to search them out in all their meanings, to dive into all their retreats—to embrace them as a whole ! We must, then, seek, apart from hours of labour properly so called, some moments at least for this spiritual repast : we must from time to time descend from the chair in which our pastoral engagements keep us continually, and seat ourselves as disciples, at the feet of Jesus Christ, mingled with and concealed among the ranks of the people who hear Him.

Fourthly : *The pastor especially requires scientific study.* Much might be said, my brethren, as to another employment of our solitary hours, as to scientific study, commendable in so many points of view, and necessary, above all, to correct what a life altogether practical, altogether composed of isolated and incidental facts, may have contracted of narrowness and obstinacy in the minds even of the best. But as a delicate question cannot be treated with accuracy except by some development of it, permit me to content myself with having pointed it out, and to hasten with you to the noblest part of my subject—to the best employment of solitude, to that from which all the others receive their usefulness and their blessing.

Fifthly : *The pastor's best employment of solitude.* “Jesus

withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed." To which among you do I not recall, by these few words, the remembrance of the most intimate and the dearest consolations of His ministry? Ah! my brethren, if the ministry brought only joys, it would still be necessary in order to enjoy them, to lay them upon the altar; it would still be necessary to have them sanctified by gratitude, by deep humiliation. The first fruits and the tithe of our successes belong to the author of our successes; after this only can we take our own share. What is there more natural, then, than to seek retirement and silence in order that all our joy, that our whole heart may raise itself to Him, that no part of it be dissipated by the winds of the age and of the day? But the ministry—this ceaseless combat against the powers of evil and of error—has other matters to confide to God besides its victories. To whom then shall this man of God, but still this *man*, to whom shall he tell without reserve the secret of those doubts, of those weaknesses, of those remissnesses, of those secret offences which a difficult and embarrassed ministry so often causes to arise in the soul best fitted for the pastorate? At whose feet, after his defeats, shall he come to throw himself, exhausted, wounded, and bathed in tears? The most holy intercourse of man with man, of pastor with pastor, precious as it is, cannot supply the place of the closer intercourse of the soul with the Lord. There are some things which can only be said to God, and which we can only think of in the presence of God. He alone, terrible and great as He is, knows how to encourage our innermost and most difficult confidences, and to draw from the recesses of our heart what we have never dared to say either to others or to ourselves. From whom shall the minister ask counsel, when the best counsels fail for want of that inward inspiration which is the best of counsels? From whom shall we ask, as his daily bread, the gift of miracles,—since all is miraculous from one end to the other of that work which conversion crowns? To whom, in the sorrows of his love, shall he come to entrust those souls whom he has

vainly entreated to be reconciled to God, and whom he sees descending with rapid steps towards the abyss with terrible carelessness? From whom shall he ask for his humbled self-love, for his irritated sensibility, a balm at once pure and mild, and a holy comfort? To what star in the heavens shall he look to hold on in safe course across this ocean of life, where human hand never yet has traced a road?

But let us not regard prayer only as a privilege; it is a duty for the Christian, it is an official duty for the pastor. An official duty, we say; and how consoling this thought to the minister, when he is obliged to acknowledge the little energy and little effect of his outward ministry! How precious at such a time is it to him to be able to lay hold of the more excellent part of the office of priesthood, of which the old attributes have disappeared under the new dispensation! How happy he feels himself, when he has vainly addressed to men his supplications, to raise them to God, in whom he is always sure of finding an attentive and a considerate hearer! As a humble sinner, he enters with downcast brow into the holy place, but yet he enters there; he carries thither with him the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, and the pledges, so to say, which he has received from God himself: and, like the high priest of former days, he intercedes for his people near to the Eternal One. Yes, my brethren, prayer for your flocks is one of the functions of your ministry, as it was one of the functions of the Sovereign Pastor, and certainly one of the principal employments of His solitary hours. "Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat," said our Lord to Simon, "but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." (Luke xxii. 31, 32.) He does not say "*I pray*," though at this hour even, doubtless, He prayed;—no, Jesus tells him "that He *had* prayed." Do you not see Him, my brethren, devoting to intercession, in a special manner, certain moments of that holy life which was altogether an intercession? Thou knowest now, son of Jonas—thou seest, at least—what interests occupied the soul of thy Master when "he went

into the mountain apart to pray" (Matt. xiv. 23); and you, followers of the son of Jonas, you understand that you also must accomplish upon the mountain alone a part of your ministry, and combat with your tears when your preaching remains without effect, or that it may have an effect. It is upon the mountain—it is to the air of heaven, if it were possible, that you must mount; it is away from the world that you must retire. There are special moments which you must set apart for this ministration. Do you love the souls which are entrusted to you? Pray much for them. Do you love them but little? Pray much for them in order to learn to love them; pray with carefulness; pray with a direct and precise meaning; have moments for this special kind of prayer—intercession; have then also hours of retirement: do not think yourselves above the immediate disciples of the Saviour—the first pastors of His Church—who asked to be set free from certain outward cares, honourable as they were, to be able, said they, "to give themselves (*vaquer*) to prayer." (Acts. vi. 4.) Prayer, in truth, is a business to which we must *give ourselves*; and especially so is the prayer of the pastor; and when we have no reason but this to seek for solitude, without doubt, my brethren, this reason will suffice.*

* We have not to contend, in such an assembly as this, with the illusions of that false spirituality which has so often served as a guide to indifference and a spirit of self-dependence. Otherwise we should have reminded you that it is not only a condemnation of pharisaism, but a positive direction of Christian prudence, that we are to look for in the words of our Master:—"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet." (Matt. vi. 6.) This recommendation to which so much weight is given by the example of the holy apostles, and that of Jesus Christ himself, has been dictated by a very just knowledge of our nature and of our wants. It is in vain to say that we ought to pray without ceasing; that prayer is less an act than an habitual tendency; an aspiration of the soul towards the adorable source of its being and of all its gifts; that it unites itself to every moment of our existence, as breathing to every movement of our body; that the life of the Christian is a prayer. We do not deny it; but is it not equally true that every day of the Christian is a sabbath, and yet we have a sabbath day in particular?

V. THESE DIFFERENT USES OF SOLITUDE CORRESPOND WITH THE DIFFERENT OFFICES OF THE GOSPEL MINISTRY.

Let us make a whole of these details: let us regard, in a general manner, the spirit of the Gospel ministry, and let us take up again, under this new form, the question with which we have been occupied. *There is a ministerial spirit, a ministerial gift, for all those whom a true calling has led to enter into*

Is it not true that every Christian is a minister, and yet we have placed under this title at the head of the Church men especially appointed? The whole universe is the temple of God, and yet we have places of worship. Even so prayer, which has a claim upon our whole life, does not demand the less a place set apart and hours devoted to it. The act of prayer, which one is not willing to concentrate, will turn into superficial emotion—into vague reverie; thought and reflection, without which no act of importance is accomplished, will cease to form part of it, and prayer, which ought to be an exercise, a work of the soul, will be nothing more (God forgive us for it) than a sort of amusement. There is almost always, in the despising of common means a dangerous presumption; there is in the faithful use of these means a healthful exercise of submission and humility. The neglect of the means of grace is nearer than one believes to the despising of grace. The disdain of the outward form will, little by little, go so far, that the object itself to which that form belongs will founder and disappear; and it is very much to be feared that he who disdains to enter into his closet to pray, will finish, sooner than he thinks, by not praying at all. What do I say? there would be nothing in this but a logical consequence of the principle which he had laid down. He despises means: but prayer itself is also a means; and if he finds it unworthy of himself to set apart certain hours for prayer, he may also find it unworthy of himself to pray. What I say is not a mere supposition: what I say has been seen—is seen still. There are mystics who forbid themselves to pray; and this extravagance, uncommon as it is, ought to alarm us, since it flows from the same contempt of means which we are combating here. Weak creatures that we are, let us know once for all our own weakness; let us not go so far in our hatred of formalism—very hateful I avow it is—as madly to reject the helps which God offers to our weakness; let us not break the steps of the ladder, in the chimerical and dangerous hope of making greater advances; let us love the means of grace for the very remembrance which they give us of our dependence, and for the humiliation which they bring to us; and, lastly, since solitude is favourable to prayer, let us, as far as we can, cultivate solitude.

this holy militia. But this gift, like all the gifts of grace, that it may not be extinguished, has need to be constantly trimmed (rallumer). We cannot doubt it after having read the words of St. Paul to his disciple Timothy: "I charge thee to stir up (rallumer) the gift of God which is in thee, which thou hast received by the laying on of my hands." (2 Tim. i. 6.) Is it Timothy as a simple Christian, or Timothy as a pastor, that St. Paul is exhorting in these words? Evidently it is the second of these two. But if the employment of the ministry had sufficed of itself to maintain and to trim the gift of the ministry, this exhortation would have been needless, or would have been included in the general exhortation to obedience, zeal, and faithfulness, which the apostle had already addressed to his beloved disciple. He does not suppose that the flame which Timothy is bearing in his hands across the world, can guard itself and increase by the mere movement of its course. He seems rather to think that, in spite of this movement—in spite of this evangelical and pastoral activity—the flame will naturally be extinguished, and that it is constantly on the point of being extinguished. Thus the exercise of the ministry is not of itself sufficient to renew constantly within us the spirit of the ministry; it requires for this, that precautions be taken, and means used, apart from the ministry. What is it then that is needed, if not an action of the soul upon itself, an inner work which, doubtless, profits by outward exercise, but which chiefly gives profit to the outward exercise? But if this inner work is necessary, who can doubt that solitude, which gives us up to it quite entirely, and which allows us to devote to it all our strength, does not aid us very efficaciously to stir up in us the gift which we have received?

We must go further, my brethren; we must allow that our outward activity, far from sufficing to guard within us the holy flame, *threatens to extinguish it*. Who does not know, by having experienced it, the inevitable effect of custom? Custom can render all kinds of objects dear and

necessary to us, but it does not teach us to respect them : its essential effect is even to wear away respect. It does not destroy, it cannot destroy, in an object the characteristics which give to it its right to respect ;—the object remains the same, but it is we who change. Fear and astonishment, which are elements of respect, gradually pass away with the novelty of the object ; and if any duty, any peculiar position, obliges us to hold frequent intercourse with any being, with any idea, with any name, the effect of which we speak is produced with frightful rapidity. This is because every impression decays when it is only an impression, a *state* and not an *action*, of the soul ; it is because, when we confine ourselves to allowing objects to act upon it, very soon they act no longer. The danger, my beloved brethren, is greater in our profession than in any other. The most delicate instruments are those which are blunted the soonest. It is dangerous for a feeling to become a function : and it is very much to be feared that when charity is raised into a profession, the profession will degenerate into a trade. The law which bids us to execute our ministry “in season and out of season” (2 Tim. iv. 2) is as dreadful as it is just. To have piety, faith, zeal, not at our season, and for ourselves, but for another, at his season, to be always ready, always prepared ; always to have, because always we ought to be able to give ; in short, to speak at all seasons of Jesus Christ, and yet never to speak except so far as we have Him in our hearts. What a task, my brethren !—what responsibility ! “Who is sufficient for these things ?” (2 Cor. ii. 16.) Happy, happy pre-eminently amongst many, is the minister who remembers never—whether in the pulpit, in his conversations, or in his prayers—having uttered the name of God in vain ! Happy is he who has never returned from a pastoral duty, or from a visit of mercy, having his conscience burdened with a sense of a profanation ! What do I say ! happy rather is he who has had this feeling. Happy is he who has suffered from it, and who has not contracted the habit of scattering abroad sacred thoughts and sacred names with as much promiscuousness,

with as much indifference, as the spring at the top of the mountain lets flow the treasures of its waters.

We must not then, my brethren, reckon too much upon our ministry itself preserving within us the spirit of the ministry. Without doubt there is a sanctifying influence in a holy ministry, but this influence may be weakened and extinguished; and when it is extinguished, then this very ministry, from being sanctifying, becomes corrupting, and does to us as much evil as it ought to do us good. The responsibility is in proportion to the advantages, the danger to the graces, and the attractions can only fade to give place to disgust. Nothing is worse, as a profound observer has said, than the corruption of what is excellent. Nothing descends lower than that which falls from the greatest height. Nothing, consequently, is so low as a minister when he has lost the spirit and savour of his ministry; and as the very exercise of this ministry exposes him to this danger, something must each day bring him back to his point of departure. His vocation must be confirmed each day; each day his consecration must be conferred on him anew. He must tremble and humble himself on account of the very ministry which constitutes his joy and glory. Far from imagining that the ministry makes the minister, he must carefully say to himself that the minister makes the ministry; and he must never feel more the need of approaching to God than when his duties of themselves alone have the appearance of bringing him near. He should follow the rule given by Francis of Sales, "continually to be making returns of spirit to God, even among the actions which have God for their object." Is it necessary to add that all these considerations ought to render solitude precious to us, and dear?

Besides, all is not *spiritual*, nor even *ecclesiastical*, in the functions which are entrusted to us. Many of our functions are matters of *business*—of *material business*. Whatever part *love* may have among them, which ennobles and adorns everything, they are nevertheless *business*. There are even some, the connexion of which with the essential end of the

ministry, it is very difficult to perceive. This inconvenience belongs, in part only, to the system under which we live. No ecclesiastical constitution can make it disappear altogether, because none can prevent the pastor from being essentially, what he is amongst ourselves, the advocate and guide of the poor, the natural comforter of all distresses, the soul of primary instruction, the medium of almost every good, the chief of the judges of peace, and the member, ceaselessly active, of a moral magistracy which society will never do without. Such is the condition, my brethren, imposed upon us. We must accept it, but with fear and trembling ; saying to ourselves, that the multitude and diversity of our duties condemn us to a life which, save for its object and its end, has all the characteristics of dissipation.

VI. IF THE BUSINESS OF OUR MINISTRY IS SO MULTIPLIED, HOW CAN WE CULTIVATE SOLITUDE ? THAT WHICH RENDERS IT NECESSARY IS PRECISELY THAT WHICH RENDERS IT DIFFICULT. My brethren, until it has been proved that it is entirely impossible, we think we have a right to reverse the terms of the objection, and to say, THAT WHICH RENDERS SOLITUDE DIFFICULT IS PRECISELY THAT WHICH RENDERS IT NECESSARY. The fewer moments you have to give to retirement, the more you ought, in proportion as they present themselves, to be eager to devote them to it. And frankly, rare as these moments are, are they so few in number as you say ? Have you fairly counted them ? Are you very sure of having given to duty all the moments which you have refused to solitude ? Long conversations, curiosity, useless complications, frivolous politeness, vain formalities—do they hold no share in the fetters which you feel and in the bewildering precipitation in which you complain of living ? Ah ! my brethren, I am less afraid of the dissipations of *charity*. If charity multiplies indefinitely our work and our care, on the other hand she renders sacred to us all our hours. She is covetous at the same time that she is lavish : what she gathers in the world is to give to

God. She knows how to find time for everything. Trust yourselves to her ; do not fear to give yourselves up to her promptitude ; she will know how fully to indemnify you. When she addresses to you one of her appeals, rise and follow her. Interrupt, in order to follow her, meditation, reading, prayer, which you may have begun. Continue your prayer in the street. Go ; you have in your hands an earnest very sure. God is your debtor, and He will well know how to give you back this hour of solitude which you have lost for His sake.

It is not then against charity that we ought to prepare to defend ourselves : it is against the world, against the indiscreet requirements of its customs ; against the seduction of its various and changing aspects ; against the ever-increasing complications of human life ; against this present form of society, which mingles all its elements and confounds all its spheres. But, in fine, if it were true that, even after refusing everthing to the world, as world, the life of the pastor were full up to the banks, would nothing remain of the recommendation which we have given ? My brethren, it would remain entire, for it is not so much *solitude* which is the great consideration as *the love and spirit of solitude*.

We remark that without this love and spirit of solitude, there is no true solitude. *True solitude is in the heart* ; and he who cannot find it there will not find it elsewhere. We meet with the world in our closet when we take it there with us. Alas ! we are not even there long alone. The difficulty of maintaining a formidable tête-à-tête with our conscience, soon throws us back towards all the objects from which we thought ourselves separated. What do I say ! it is then that passions and evil thoughts, which outward activity had kept at a distance, demand and obtain audience. We collect ourselves,—yes, but in evil ; and our second state is worse than the first. We ought not then, my brethren, to consider solitude as a state, but as an action, as an exercise. It is necessary that our retirement may really continue, that it have been begun in the heart ; it is even necessary that it be

consummated there ; that it be more or less independent of outward circumstances ; so that, even amidst the agitation of action and the noise of the world, we may enjoy its benefits, and say, as the holy bishop of whom I have already spoken, "I am surrounded with people, but my heart is nevertheless alone."

The heart, then, is alone when the world has disappeared ; and the world which surrounds us, which envelops us, can only disappear from us in so far as something intervenes between us and it. Grief, a deep grief, produces sometimes this effect, and it is even for this end that God intends it ; but this very effect is only attained when grief brings with it the thought of God : otherwise, deplorable fact, we attach ourselves to the world by the very grief which was intended to detach us from it. A heart truly alone is that in which God is present. The presence of God, which is the end of solitude, is also the means. It is because it is God alone who can hide from us the world. All which is not God is not sufficient, because all that is not God is still the world. Yes, it is the world still, that serious toil of thought ; it is the world still, that laborious and concentrated study ; it is the world still, that attentive observation of ourselves. To return into oneself, under any guidance other than that of God, is to return into the world. A heart from which God is absent is tremulous, noisy, and dissipated as a public place :—and in truth it is a public place, a square, where all which is called the world empties itself and flows in from all sides. True solitude, useful solitude, consists altogether in the realization of the presence of God.

My brethren, each man has his god. The passion of each man is his god, in the presence of which he obliges himself to live ; and when this passion has not a material object in view—when it is, so to speak, a passion of the spirit—it easily assumes the appearance of religion. How many men have devoted their worship to an idea ! how many men, to appropriate it to themselves, or to make it productive, have withdrawn from the outer world—which they have forgotten

even to its most ordinary politenesses ; even to its most imperative necessities—and have lived for long years, all alone, with an abstract thought or a distant hope ! What do I say ? many have not needed a positive hope, an end sought for out for themselves ; their will seems to have taken their will itself for object, and they have arrived with admirable success at the state of living perpetually in the presence of their god.

Is our God less God than theirs ! He who is love ; He who became man for us, poor for us, accursed for us ; the God who is good ; the God our Saviour !—can He not then dwell in us, as their god dwells in them ? Have we no means of fixing Him in this living temple, which He prefers to all other temples ? Can He not so communicate Himself to us as to unite Himself with all our situations, with all our acts, as our respiration unites itself to all the movements of our body ? Can we not carry everywhere this God with us, as the man of the world carries his idol everywhere ? Can we not refer everything to Him, as the man of the world refers everything to his favourite thought or governing passion ? What ! can I say that this is impossible when I see men who collect themselves in the midst of business, and whom business itself seems to render collected, because in proportion as they feel themselves pressed upon by men and things, they retire into themselves, and seek with greater love the regards and the intercourse of their God ? Yes ; there are men who would tell you with mourning, but who yet would tell you, in what rare moments they have felt that they were living out of God. Without aspiring to a privilege so high, cannot every Christian ask that God would be to him, in turns, solitude amidst the crowd, and society in the desert ?

All that we have said of the advantages of *outward solitude*, we maintain, my brethren ; and we desire that each of us should regard it as a *means*, which he ought to seize with eagerness. It is the duty of the Christian, it is part of the spirit of Christianity, to lay hold of all the means with as much eagerness as if they were indispensable ; and then, when

means fail, to act as if they were valueless, and to leave oneself entirely in the hands of that God who has said to us, "My grace is sufficient for thee"; for it is the grace of God which gives the means, and it is the same grace which can supply their place. It is this, then, which will give you, amidst your business, a solitude more excellent than that which you seek in your closet. When you live this secret and second life, then you will be everywhere alone :—alone in the pulpit, in the midst of that audience which watches and judges you ; alone in your visits of mercy, where vexations wait for and assail you ; alone in those conversations on business where matter and time seem to claim you altogether. The grace of God transforms all ; the presence of God sanctifies all : obstacles become means, and the very works, the very cares, which seem to be necessarily a descent towards the world, become for us as the steps of the altar. Such is the secret of those pastoral lives, of which, thanks to God, examples are not wanting among us—of those lives not only always fresh and always lively, but always more fresh and more lively ; and which would be withered in their activity, and by means of their activity, if they did not know where constantly to temper themselves afresh, and renew their youth. My brethren, this necessary grace, you know from whom it is to be obtained, and how it is to be obtained ; you know to whom God communicates Himself ; you know in what struggle He delights to be overcome. Ask of Him, as Christians and pastors, the sentiment of His presence. However little you obtain of it at first, it will always be more than you had desired ; and if you are not unfaithful to the first favour, a second will follow ; and a single sigh raised to God in one of your rare moments of recollection will prolong them, will multiply them ; will unite them one to the other, will extend them over your whole life, and you will have found thus, by turns, solitude in God, and God in solitude. Amen.

Translated by D. G. WATT, M.A.

The Genius of the Gospel.

ABLE expositions of the Gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers ; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its *widest* truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach ; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim ; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

THIRTY-FIRST SECTION.—*Matt. xi. 16—20.*

Children in the Market-place ; or, the Two Sides of Truth, and the Two Sides of Human Life.

THERE are three general truths deducible from this remarkable passage :—

I. THAT GOD, IN HIS DISPENSATION OF TRUTH TO MAN, PRESENTS IT UNDER A TWOFOLD PHASE—THE SEVERE AND THE MILD. John was the representative of the one, Jesus of the other. John did not come “eating and drinking” ;—he displayed no genial sympathies ; no sweet strains of love fell from his lips. His life was one of isolation and ascetic severities. He was *law and terror*—the embodiment of the rigorous : the rigorous in habit, speech, and spirit. Sinai seemed the home of his nature. He folded himself in its clouds, he shot forth its lightning, and rolled its fulminations. On the contrary, Jesus was *love and hope*. It is true that at times Jesus assumed the severe, and His words were scathing and terrible in the extreme. But this was the exception. Mildness was the characteristic of His ministry. His great theme was the love of the INFINITE FATHER. The breath of His prayer, the spirit of His work, the import of His sufferings, the reason of His death, were *love for man*.

Now, divine truth has always these two sides. Like the Hebrew pillar, it has a dark and a bright side. In other words, in has law as well as love, justice as well as mercy. There are the principles of everlasting rectitude, as well as the provisions of redeeming grace.

First : *Analogy would suggest that truth has these two sides.* What is NATURE but a revelation of truth ? But nature has its bright and dark side—its mild and severe aspects. It has its days of sunshine and serenity, when the earth smiles in beauty under genial skies, and all life overflows with joy. But it has, on the other side, its earthquakes, that engulf cities ; its vapors and simoons, whose brea this destruction ; its furious storms, that spread devastation over sea and land. What is HUMAN EXPERIENCE, too, but a revelation of truth ? Every day of a man's life is a new chapter of divine revelation. But this experience has its two sides. It has days of health, prosperity, and friendship, when "the cup runneth over" ; and it has days of sickness, adversity, and bereavement. Thus both *nature* and *experience* suggest that there are law and justice in the universe, as well as love and mercy.

Secondly : *Variety in the temperament of God's ministers indicates that truth has these two sides.* There is a manifest difference in the organizations of men. Some are cold, reserved, doubting, gloomy ; others are warm, sociable, confiding, cheerful. Some are, like John the Baptist, too morose and reserved to eat and drink with men ; others, like Jesus, have a genial nature, disposed to identify itself with all. Now, I take it that there is no organization *necessarily* unfitted to communicate truth ; and perhaps there is no character of temperament that God has not, as a fact, employed for the purpose. But it is manifestly possible that these different organizations could give exactly the same aspects. Truth, like the river, receives its color and taste from the channel through which it flows. Peter, with his impetuous and defiant nature, could not give

exactly the same shade of truth as the reserved and contemplative John.

Thirdly : *The moral circumstances of the race seem to require these two sides of truth.* Some sinners—those especially of the lower class of mind—are only moved by the terrible. The preacher, either to awaken or interest them, must deal much with the appalling. The day of judgment, the solemnities of death, the agonies of hell,—these are their subjects ; and the minister, in every age, who can deal the most fluently and dramatically in these, will be to this class the most acceptable. There are others—the reasoning and the cultured—whom these subjects will scarcely touch. The love of God, the beauties of holiness, the example and claims of Jesus, are what will excite and reform them. The world therefore, wants these two views of truth. It must have the rigorously ethical and the tenderly benevolent. It must have the Boanerges and a Barnabas, a John the Baptist and a John the Evangelist.

Fourthly : *The structure of the Bible represents these two sides of truth.* In almost every chapter you will find these two aspects. You will find the *severe* in the history of all judgments, in the denunciations of sin, in the threatenings of approaching wrath ; and you will find the *merciful* in the record of gracious interpositions, pathetic entreaties, and glorious promises. Mercy and judgment run through every page of this Heaven-inspired book.

Another truth deducible from this remarkable passage is—

II. THAT THERE IS A CLASS OF MEN WHO WILL FIND FAULT WITH GOD'S TRUTH, UNDER WHATEVER FORM IT MAY BE PRESENTED. "But whereunto shall I liken this generation ? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced ; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking,

and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, &c. Children in the days of Christ, and in Judea, as children now and everywhere, derived their sports and amusements from the habits and customs of adults. Among the Jews it was customary, on marriage or other joyous occasions, for some musician to strike up some jubilant air for the company to join in, or dance to ; and at funerals, for the functionary to commence some solemn dirge, and for the company to respond by beating their breasts, and other signs of sorrow. The children observed these things as they were constantly going on around them. Childlike, they turned the realities of men into play. They made funerals and marriages their amusement. They had the musician with his pipe for the wedding dance, and the official mourner to stimulate and direct the expressions of funereal grief. Jesus observed the sports of little children. Nothing connected with humanity, in its humblest stages of development, was uninteresting to Him. We may suppose him standing for a few moments in some "market"-place, and marking with interest a little group of children assembled for play ;—some full of the genial and the jocose, and anxious to commence the sport. They propose one game after another. The wedding and the burial, the gay and the solemn, are suggested to their companions ; but they, with an ill-natured fastidiousness, refuse to join in either. In the conduct of these sulky and perverse children, whom their good-natured companions could not please, Jesus saw an image of the adult population amongst whom He lived and wrought.*

* Olshausen remarks, that "the whole figure would be misunderstood were it to be viewed as though the children who are speaking represented Jesus and St. John—the representation of mildness and severity ; while the other children addressed or spoken to represented the capricious people. Both classes of the children—the speaking ones and those spoken to—on the contrary, are to be considered as representatives of the capricious contemporaries of Jesus ; so that the meaning is, This generation resembles a host of ill-humoured children that cannot be pleased in any way ; the one part desiring this, the other part

Nothing would please them. "John came neither eating nor drinking," &c. He lived in rigorous abstinency : seldom ever ate in the presence of men,—never with them ; and because of this, your fastidious people would not receive his doctrines. You say that "he had a devil,"—that he was mad. I have come eating and drinking ; I mingle with men ; I am social and free ; I join them at their festive board ; I have nothing of the austerity of John in my nature or habits ; and because of this you will not receive my doctrines. You say that I am "a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." John the preacher of repentance lived as an ascetic, and called for mourning ; I the messenger of salvation join you in your social enjoyments, and invite you to cheerfulness ; but you reject us both.

As it was with sinners in the days of Christ, so it has ever been, and so it is now. *God cannot please them ; no dispensation of events will please them ; no dispensation of truth will please them ; no ministry will do.* The sermon is either too crude or too finished, too doctrinal or too practical ; the minister is either too intellectual or too commonplace, too sombre or too cheerful, too reserved or too free. No true ministry can please sinners. The ministry popular amongst them is not the ministry of God. *Why cannot a true ministry, under any form—severe or mild—please the sinner ?*

First : *Because of the self-dissatisfying power in the sinner's soul.* A good man is satisfied in himself ; he rejoices in himself. Not so with an ungodly man : he *cannot* be satisfied with himself. His heart and his conscience are always

that ; so that, after all, no degree of useful activity is attained by them." For our own part, we do not see how the happy children proposing the play, and endeavoring to please their companions, can in any way represent the Jewish people, to whom Jesus refers ; nor can we see that it is necessary to regard them as *representative* in any respect ;—*i. e.*, representative of Jesus and John, or the Jewish people. It seems to us that the fastidious children spoken to are *representative*, and they only.

in antagonism, and under moral excitement the conflict is fierce and terrible. What the conscience approves the heart condemns, and the reverse. What pleases one part of the nature, so long as each part is in conflict, cannot please the other. Because the sinner is thus dissatisfied with himself, he is dissatisfied with everything else. The self-dissatisfied man *must* be a fault-finder ; he cannot be otherwise. He is a cynic in the universe.

Secondly : *Because of the self-gratifying impulse in the sinner's heart.* The sinner is always bent on his own gratification. His own pleasure is everything to him. This is the centre point of his soul. A true ministry, whether severe or mild, strikes directly against this. It denounces selfishness in all its forms, and demands a crucifixion of "the old man, with all its corruptions and lusts." The ministry of John and the ministry of Christ agree in this. Sinai and Calvary blend their voices in the command to deny ourselves. The sinner, therefore, cannot be pleased with it.

Thirdly : *Because of the sin-exonerating tendency in the sinner's heart.* In order to reconcile conscience to the depraved likings and gratifications of the heart, the sinner's mind is ever disposed to seek excuses. The intellect is ever in search of palliations. It is always, therefore, ready to find fault with the dispensations of God, in order to justify to the conscience its wicked ways. What son in the family is most ready to find fault with the parent ? It is the most undutiful ; because fault in his father would help him to reconcile himself to his own disobedient life. What servant is most ready to find fault with his master ? It is the most indolent and worthless. What pupil is most ready to find fault with his teacher ? It is the most indocile. For this reason the most wicked spirits are the most disposed to find fault with God.

III. THAT WHILST THERE IS A CLASS WHO WILL THUS FIND FAULT WITH GOD'S TRUTH UNDER EVERY FORM IN WHICH IT IS PRESENTED, THERE ARE OTHERS WHO HEARTILY

APPROVE OF IT IN ALL ITS ASPECTS. "But wisdom is justified of her children." This proposition will show its truthfulness in the light of the following facts, which are implied in the expression.

First : *That this varied manifestation of truth to man is ascribable to the highest WISDOM.* It is that Wisdom which, in the natural world, has appointed darkness and light, cold and heat, attraction and repulsion ; that in the spiritual has arrayed these varied phases and ministries of truth. The diversity is neither accident nor mistake, but the arrangement of wisdom ;—indeed, the "manifold wisdom of God" in the dispensations of biblical truth.

Secondly : *That this WISDOM has a certain class of men on earth who are to be regarded as its offspring.* "Her children." Who are the children of this heavenly Wisdom ? They are evidently persons whom our Saviour regarded as being in contrast with those perverse and fault-finding persons who rejected truth under all its forms, and whom He likens to fastidious children playing in the market-place. The children of "wisdom" are those who have been regenerated by the doctrines which wisdom thus dispenses. They see things in the light in which wisdom points them out, and they pursue a course of life agreeable to that which wisdom directs. They are *the children of wisdom*,—having a spirit of reverence and obedience for that heavenly wisdom displayed everywhere in the Bible.

Thirdly : *That these children of WISDOM thoroughly approve of the truth in whatever form it comes.* "Wisdom is justified of her children." The dark and bright sides are both approved by the children. They have experienced the worth of both sides. When they were indifferent and ungodly even as others, it was the terrible aspects of truth that broke their guilty slumbers, and alarmed them with their danger. Afterwards, when through fear of hell they were about sinking into despair, it was the mild and loving displays of truth that came to their relief. And even subsequently the two sides are useful to keep their spirits

in a proper balance between extreme doubt and extreme confidence. They say, "Even so, Father," under all manifestations. Whether the Great One speaks to them in earthquakes or in the whispering breeze, from behind the cloud of adversity or in the sunshine of prosperity, from Sinai or Calvary, all is right. Wisdom is ever "justified of her children."

Germs of Thought.

SUBJECT :—*God's Way Unsearchable.*

"Thy way, O Lord, is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters,
and thy footsteps are not known."—Psa. lxxvii. 19.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Thirty-eighth.

LIFE to all, more or less, is a conflict ; and man's mission is to bear, as well as to act, well. This is especially true of those who, taught of God, connect every event in their history with that moral system which Heaven has established to educate man for eternity. To them God is alike in the sunshine and cloud. The same Hand, unseen, presents the bitter cup, and spreads the welcome repast. To-day is the seed time for to-morrow ;—the present is shaping the future ; and earth, with its many "brakes, which virtue must go through," is the scene of preparation for "the new earth, in which the just shall dwell."

Faith, then, is indispensable ; and even with it the good man is at times, from the dark clouds which hang over his head, led to exclaim, "Where is God my Maker?" Few men have more forcibly realized this state than the Psalmist did, who, musing on the mysteries of Divine Providence,

gave expression to the sublime language,—“Thy way, O Lord, is in the sea,” &c.

I. THE DOINGS OF GOD EMBRACE A WIDE RANGE. “In the sea.” We are apt to regard things as we view them in our own individual and contracted world. Each one has his own world, in which *he* lives. It may be larger or smaller than that of his neighbour, as his mind may be larger or smaller, but it is, after all, a little world, and almost infinitely small compared with the world in which he dwells. What, however, is this dwelling-place of man compared with that moral universe which is under the government of God, and for the harmony and peace of which the smallest incidents are made subservient to His will, though they may appear to us as insignificant as the fall of a leaf or the drooping of a flower? “Thy way, O Lord, is in the sea.” The sea is one, though the atoms which compose it are separate and distinct. One atom affects all atoms, though to the naked eye this is not discernible. We see now only “in part,” and that, too, within a most limited range. Science, however, has established the fact, that you cannot disturb the smallest part of the watery or atmospheric world without disturbing the whole of it. So in the moral world: all events, however small, have a bearing on events great and distant. God governs the life of one man in connexion with all men. What happens to-day is only one link in the chain, which stretches through ages, and is connected with events, it may be, of distant lands. God does not carry out his great plans in the present, disconnected from the past or future. The long chain of events cognizable by man has already extended through six thousand years, and may, for aught we know, extend through a duration as long in the future. To the Infinite Mind the past and the future are alike present; and in His government of the children of men, He embraces all who have lived, all who do live, and all who shall live; and in connexion, too, with unnumbered worlds, tenanted, doubtless,

by intelligent and happy beings. How vast, then, the multitude of souls over whom He holds dominion !

How can the finite grasp the plans of Him who is infinite in counsel ? As when standing on the lone beach, or on the high cliff, we cannot comprise in our view the out-stretched ocean which rolls at our feet, so are we unable, whatever be our spiritual elevation, to encompass the range of God's doings in the sphere of man's probation.

II. THE TRACES OF GOD'S DOINGS ARE NOT CONSECUTIVELY SEEN. You have watched, it may be, a vessel with her unfurled sails leaving the harbour. As the breezes bore her onward, you have seen the waters cleaved by her gliding keel ; but no sooner were they cleaved than they closed again. After a while no traces were left as to the course she took. The impulse which the outsailing vessel had imparted to the quiet waters, spreading many a rippling wave, was no longer present, and all was as unruffled again as a summer's lake. Mark the words of our text :—" His footsteps are not known." We see the finger-mark oftentimes of God. We can often say, respecting some unlooked-for event, This is the Lord's doings ; God has been here ; but we know not the way He has gone ;—we cannot discern the traces of his next doings. The waters of life's ocean have been suddenly cleft, but they have closed again.

We are prone to imagine that the Almighty occasionally comes forth to do a strange work in the earth, and that at other times He leaves events to occur according to the operation of natural laws. It is true that all things proceed on a system ; that God works by laws which he has established, though many of these laws are never, and can never be recognised by us. But what is system, what are laws, but the mere relation of one thing to another, or one thing following another, and which is merely nothing without the presence of his power, who worketh all according to the good pleasure of His will ?

There is an uninterrupted connexion in all God's doings—

one unbroken chain,—and to speak after the allusion of our text, a continuous succession of footsteps. Now, what we say is, that we do not see this connexion ; that we do not see link united to link—footsteps following footsteps. “His footsteps are not seen, for his way is in the sea.” Earthly soil which receives an impress retains it, but what impress can water retain ? You may make the impression, but you cannot fix it. So may you interpret a sorrow ; but its connexion with your future history you may not see. The mark of God’s finger you may see to-day, but to-morrow the impress is gone. Providence, like a vast and complicated machine, can only be comprehended, in all its complex arrangements, by Him who framed it. We see but a small part of it. It may be, to keep up the simile, that we see here a wheel, there a lever ; here a pivot, and there a spring ; but what connexion one part has with another, and how the whole is kept in continuous and harmonious motion—and that too on the highest principles of reason—we are at a loss to conjecture.

III. THE REASON OF GOD’S DOINGS IS OFTEN BEYOND ALL HUMAN COMPREHENSION. “His paths are in *deep waters*.” We do not say that we cannot, at any time, understand the purposes contemplated in His acts of providence. There is frequently no mistake as to the lessons they convey, and the purposes for which they are executed, although there may be other reasons known only to the Infinite mind. The blasphemer who invokes the Divine vengeance, and is scathed by the lightning flash, is a visible manifestation of awful retribution. So was it with him who, in regal power and presumptuous pride, gave not God the glory, and was eaten up of worms. The mother who experienced the death of her child to be the life of her soul can ever read the design of Heaven on the green turf which covers her sleeping babe. What, too, is mystery now, may be cleared up ere we end life’s journey. It was very dark when Jacob wept and exclaimed, “Joseph, without doubt, is rent in

pieces ;" but the many colored coat—the cold, damp pit, the dim-lighted prison, were only so many links in the chain which connected the old man's state of want with that of affluence.

There are, however, dark dispensations, and many, too—

"Too deep to sound with mortal lines,
Too dark to view with mortal sense."

These are His paths in deep waters. There are depths in the ocean which cannot be sounded. They *are* to be sounded, but man cannot do it. Beyond a certain depth the plummet ceases to sink. So with these mortal depths : they are to be sounded, perhaps, by angels, but not by man. But there are depths which no sinless intelligence, however exalted, can fathom—none but the mighty God himself. What is man that he should be able to interpret the doings of God, to survey entire His plans, to fathom His designs, to trace His footsteps ? "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand," &c. Wherever we turn our eye, over the wide domain of nature, we behold things past finding out. The blade of grass which erects its spiral form to heaven, the pearly dew-drop enshrined in beauty on the flower, the tiny insect humming its joyous lay in the evening sunbeam, a ray of light shot from the orb of day, presents each a subject fraught with mysteries which might absorb the investigating powers of a Newtonian intellect for ages.

As in the natural, so in the moral world we recognise the work of God's hand, but we know not what He is doing. His judgments go abroad, and at times startle the nations of the earth, and cause us to feel impressively the truth, that "Clouds and darkness are round about His throne." The origin of moral evil—the access of fallen spirits to, and their mode of operation on, man's spiritual nature—human responsibility, and God's eternal decrees, involve questions which by man may never be answered ; but enough for us should it be that His footsteps are in *deep* waters.

The mysteries of heaven, however, we must believe to

conduce to universal good. Some we *know* to be positive blessings. Great indeed is the mystery of godliness ; and yet what fact is more glorious in its character, and more blessed in its practical bearings ? Divine sovereignty with free agency is a fact involving what is utterly incomprehensible to us ; and yet the good man rejoices in his freedom, and, at the same time, in the remembrance that his Father in heaven causes all things in his history to work out his lasting good.

The darkness around the Eternal throne is only darkness to us—to Him who sits thereon it is ever light. All His purposes are for the general good and lasting happiness of His unnumbered family. Sorrow itself is designed to issue in rejoicing, darkness in unclouded light, and even the earth, which revolves round the sun, as a vast sepulchre is to merge into a paradise again.

Like, then, as the sufferings and exile of our honored forefathers tended to the establishment of an empire which takes the rule among the nations of the world, so are all suffering and conflicts tending to the spread and deepening of the foundations of that kingdom whose peerless glory shall last when suns shall shine no more.

W. BEALBY.

SUBJECT :—*Fallen Humanity Elected to Redemption in Preference to Fallen Angels.*

“For verily he took not on him the nature of angels ; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.”—Heb. ii. 16.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Thirty-ninth.

ASSUMING that the generally received view of this passage, which regards the apostles as asserting the election of fallen men to salvation in preference to fallen angels, is correct, the words imply two facts, worthy of our deepest and devoutest consideration.

First : *That there are two distinct classes of moral existences in the universe standing in need of redemption* : “angels” and “the seed of Abraham”—*humanity*. That man is in a fallen state is a fact revealed in the consciousness of the race, as well as in the word of God. But the fact that a class of angels should be in this position, we learn exclusively from the Bible ; and the Bible on this subject gives no uncertain sound. It tells us, in numerous and unequivocal utterances, of angels who, having not kept their first estate, but “left their own habitation, are reserved in chains of darkness until the judgment of the great day.” The origin of man’s fall we have revealed, but the origin of the fall of angels is to us a profound mystery. We cannot understand the prompting motives in the sin of the first sinner. We account for sin amongst men on two principles—that of an internal tendency and that of an external temptation. Man, as a depraved being, is prone to evil ; and man, as an innocent being, had a powerful external temptation brought to bear upon him. But the first sinner had neither of these. All within and all without were in favour of holiness. The whole current of inward feeling, and the whole tide of outward circumstances, flowed in favor of obedience to the Eternal will ;—yet he sinned. This world, then, is not the only rebellious province in the universe—not the only province standing in deep need of redemption.

Another fact contained in these words is—

Secondly : *That the great God works for the restoration of fallen men, but not for fallen angels*. “He took not on him the nature of angels,” &c. The word *επιλαμβάνεται*, which some expositors have interpreted “assumed our nature,” is capable of another—and, we think, a more correct—rendering. The word signifies to take hold of a thing with one’s hand, in order to raise or support it. The same word is employed in Mark viii. 23. “He”—Christ—“took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town.” It is employed in Luke xiv. 4, where it is said of Christ, in relation to the man that had the dropsy, that “he took him,

and healed him." It is employed also in Luke xxiii. 26, where the men engaged in the crucifixion of Christ are said to have "laid hold of one Simon, a Cyrenian," in order that he might bear the cross on which Christ was to be put to death. The word occurs in some fourteen other places in the New Testament, and in every case expressing the same general idea.

The idea of the passage is, that God stretched forth His merciful hand, and took hold upon man as he was sinking—for *sin is a sinking force*—under the weight of his transgressions, in order to raise and save him, whilst He allowed fallen angels to sink for ever under the load of their iniquity. And this idea is clearly taught in other places of the divine word. Whilst He commends His redemptive love to us, He reserves them "in chains of darkness."

Now, the question I wish to raise—not for mental speculation, but for devout impression—is, Why this Divine preference for fallen man? Why select poor frail men for redemption rather than "angels that excel in strength?" This is a point which perhaps we too often overlook. We seem to take it for granted, that God had only to determine to redeem, and that man, as a matter of course, would be the object; not remembering that there was another rebellious province as likely to have been elected as man. Let us then devoutly enquire for a moment into this wonderful election; and in doing so, I would submit two general observations:—

I. THAT THERE ARE STRONG REASONS WHICH MIGHT HAVE LED US TO SUPPOSE THAT GOD WOULD HAVE GIVEN THE PREFERENCE TO FALLEN ANGELS. What are the reasons?

First : *The superiority of angelic natures.* That angels in their spiritual constitution are superior to men scarcely admits of doubt. The concurrent impressions of mankind on the subject, the superhuman attributes of vision, celerity, and power, ascribed to them in the Bible, and the sad assurance that one of their rebellious members had sufficient power to lead the human population captives at his will, are sufficient

to place the question of their superiority beyond debate. They "excel in strength." One angel, perhaps, may have as much intellectual and moral power as would be found in a whole generation of men.

But how would their superiority incline us to decide in their favor as objects of redemptive love? Suppose a human sovereign to have two rebellious provinces—one far superior to the other in power and influence—and suppose that he could restore to loyalty *either with equal* facility, and the question were put to us, Which would he be likely to select for restoration, supposing that he should select either? Our answer, we think, would be prompt and decisive. We should say that he would fix upon the superior province, for two reasons :—first, because it would be the best way of preventing the spread of rebellion through his empire ; and, secondly, because it would be the best way of promoting the peace and harmony of the state.

Bound as we are, by a necessity of nature, to form our judgment of the reasons of the Divine conduct by analogy—by comparing them with those that generally influence ourselves—we should conclude the same in relation to God as we should suppose in relation to the human sovereign. We know, indeed, that in proportion to the native or acquired power of a being, is the amount of influence he would have, for good or evil, upon other minds. The strong can affect the weak, but the weak have but little influence upon the strong. A man can mould the moral character of a child, but the child has no such power upon the man. If angels are superior to men, they can influence man ; but man cannot influence them. Angels have ruined man, but there is no instance known to us of a man ruining an angel. We should, therefore, be disposed to conclude, that if God deigned to rescue either province, the angelic would be selected. By doing so, we should think that, He would not only prevent fallen angels from doing an amount of injury to the universe, which would be beyond the power of fallen man, but also, by securing their love and loyalty, He would best promote the interests

of His great empire. If *one* angel has power to lead a human world captive at his will, how much more valuable to the universe would a restored province of such intelligences be than a restored province of feeble men !

Another reason which would incline us to decide in favor of fallen angels would be—

Secondly : *The probability of their greater misery.* There are two things which can determine the greatness of a moral creature's misery. First : The extent of his capacity for suffering. The sinner who is capable of taking the profoundest and most comprehensive views of sin, will have the largest capacity for moral suffering. It is because Christ saw sin in all its tremendous bearings, relations, and issues, that His anguish in Gethsemane became so overwhelming. Secondly ; Contrast between the present and past is another principle which will determine the greatness of a moral being's misery. Amongst men, here and now, it is not always so much the circumstances in which they are placed that render them unhappy, as the relation of these circumstances to their previous history. The very circumstances which would make a humble cottager happy, would render the proud man, trained amid the pomp and luxury of a palace, miserable, were he doomed to them. From these two principles, we are disposed to believe that the misery of fallen angels must be greater than that of fallen men. Their capacity is greater ; and the contrast between the present and the past is greater. How lofty in dignity, how sublime in happiness, their original position ! They were amongst the morning stars that sang at creation's dawn. Their great leader was the chief of created intelligences.

“ Amidst the highest of Heaven's hierarchy he stood
Near to the throne, close by the side of God.”

But how would the probability of their greater misery incline us to suppose that they would have the preference ? Why, knowing that the idea of redeeming at all would

arise from sovereign love and mercy, we should conclude that that mercy in God, as ever in man, would fasten upon the greatest misery.

Another reason which would incline us to decide in favor of fallen angels, would be—

Thirdly : *Their greater competency of appreciating the redemptive act.* The loftier the ideas that one has of God, the more deep will be the impression of His condescension in noticing His creatures. It was when David caught a lofty conception of the Eternal—when he gazed upon the night-heavens, beheld the teeming host of stars and the glorious moon pursue their brilliant march, each reflecting the glory of its Creator—that he felt the condescension of his Maker, and exclaimed, “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,” &c. How much loftier would the ideas of angels be of God than men’s. Their great natures were trained under the immediate splendor of His throne, and their swift pinions had borne them far over His great universe. How much more capable, therefore, would they be of feeling His wonderful condescension in their redemption.

Such are some of the reasons which would appear in favor of the redemption of fallen angels in preference to fallen men. I think that a still stronger case could be made out in their favor. Suppose that there was a period far back in the history of the universe when the idea that God intended to redeem at all was first communicated to a few of His unfallen intelligences. Let us suppose that this idea came to these spirits at first in its most rudimental form ; that all that was understood was that He would redeem one of the rebellious provinces—either that of fallen angels or fallen men—but no one knew which. Let us suppose that the objects of the Divine choice became with them, for a time, a subject of conjecture ;—what do you think would be the probable conclusion they would come to ? It does seem to me, for the reasons I have stated, that the first impression would be in favour of fallen angels.

We go on now to our other general observation, which is—

II. THAT ALTHOUGH THERE MIGHT APPEAR STRONG REASONS FOR THE CHOICE OF FALLEN ANGELS, WE CAN DISCOVER MOST SATISFACTORY REASONS FOR THE ELECTION OF FALLEN MEN.

First : *The election of men in preference to fallen angels furnishes a more striking manifestation of Divine justice.* It gives a stronger display of justice in two ways. First : In allowing the originators of evil to continue in suffering. Fallen angels were the originators of moral evil. They were the first to entertain rebellious thoughts ; the first to renounce their allegiance to Heaven ; the first to break the peace and harmony of the creation. The fact that they were passed by, and left to pine away for ever in their chains and darkness, was a strong expression of Divine justice. It gives a more striking display of justice, secondly, in exposing the enormity of sin, even in the *meanest* intelligence. Man, probably, is the humblest member of God's intelligent family, and his redemption, therefore, shows that sin, even in the humblest of his creatures, and that even though prompted by others, is so enormous as to require the sufferings and death of *His own Son*, for its expiation. Could justice have given a more impressive lesson to the universe against sin than this ? The lamb "in the midst of the throne as it had been slain" is a homily of Eternal Justice against sin that will prevent for ever another rebellion amongst the illustrious ranks of the holy and the good.

Secondly : *The election of men in preference to fallen angels furnishes a more striking manifestation of Divine independence.* The Almighty knew that had fallen angels been elected, and man passed by, that man would not have had the power to oppose Him in His redemptive operations as fallen angels do now. He knew that devils would employ their mighty energies in efforts to thwart the plans of mercy, and destroy the souls of men. In electing man, therefore, he defied the constant and strenuous opposition of these mighty spirits. He declared by His choice that He was independent of the services of His *highest* creatures, and that He would carry on His purposes despite of their mightiest opposition. His intelli-

gent creatures require to be deeply and constantly impressed with His absolute independency of them, that they may render to Him an unselfish worship. He is not to be served "as though He needed anything."

Thirdly : *The election of men in preference to fallen angels furnishes a more striking manifestation of Divine condescension.* The humbler a being is the more majestic is the condescension in visiting him. There is condescension displayed by God in noticing the highest of His creatures, but more in His visiting the lowest. To save man He had to bow the heavens and come down. He had to assume our nature to identify Himself with the race ; to become the Brother of universal man—bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. Herein is condescension ! "O the depths of the wisdom !" &c.

In conclusion—

First : *How cautious should we be in pronouncing judgment upon the conduct of God.* Antecedently, as we have seen, the redemption of fallen angels in preference to fallen men might have seemed to a finite understanding the most proper course for the Almighty to have pursued ; but His course has been otherwise ; and the history of the case commends it to our best judgments and feelings. Let us not dictate to Infinite Wisdom. Let Him follow His own course, and in the end we shall see and feel its wisdom.

Secondly : *How devoutly earnest should man's acceptance of this redemption be.* Did man feel rightly, redemption would be the subject of every thought, the chorus of every song. It would consume our selfishness, and transform our souls into love. Our language would be with Paul—"God forbid that I should glory," &c. What if man reject this redemption ? Who shall declare the folly of the act ? Who shall measure the enormity of the crime ? Better a thousand times that it had been provided for devils and not for man, than that it should have been provided for man and he reject it. How may devils on the day of judgment ridicule the folly of the men who rejected that salvation which the merciful Creator had provided for them !

Thirdly : *How zealously should those who have become participators of this redemption seek to extend it to others.* Alas ! that so few of the race, for whom salvation has been provided, should know of it : that whilst it is known in Heaven and in hell, to millions on earth it is still an unknown fact. Let us publish it. Let every sea bear its message, and every breeze waft its story.

SUBJECT :—*The Relation of Christ to the Religious Feeling of Humanity.*

“And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen ; saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord : peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.”—Luke xix. 37—40.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Fortieth.

CHRIST was now about entering Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea, the home of prophets and priests, and the richest scene of Hebrew associations. It was on the Monday of that week on which the Jews would “fill up the measure of their iniquities” by crucifying the Son of God. It was the dawn of a wonderful week for Judea—for humanity—for the universe.

In the narrative of our Saviour’s journey towards Jerusalem (commencing at the twenty-ninth verse), we discover several remarkable and profoundly significant things.

First : *The superhuman under the garb of the human.* The knowledge which He displayed about the existence, position, and owner of the ass in a neighboring village, the right which He claimed to its use, the authority with which He despatched His two disciples, and the strange readiness of the owner to

accede to His request, are indications of powers and rights more than human.

Secondly : *The majestic under the garb of the mean.* Christ, as a *mere* man, was great—great in intellect, heart, purpose, action ;—as a Mediator, supremely great. But how does this great Being, Prince of the powers of the earth, enter Jerusalem ? In a triumphal chariot ?—on a stately, prancing steed, accompanied by a magnificent cavalcade ? No ! On an ass. The more truly kingly a man is, the less he cares for conventional pageantry. Your great men have never cared for jewellery. The more ornaments are coveted, and dress is studied, the more mean and impoverished the soul. Heart of oak requires neither veneer nor varnish. A great age has never been an age of millinery and gold rings. The kingly soul does not care for the robe or the crown.

Thirdly : *The eternal under the garb of the incidental.* It seemed perfectly incidental that Christ should have required a creature to ride upon, and that there should be such a creature at hand ; but all this was but the carrying out of an eternal plan that an old prophet saw some six hundred years before. “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion !” &c. Caprice and impulse had no part in the control of Christ’s life. The life of virtue is never that of impulse or accident ; it is always the unfoldment of an eternal idea.

Fourthly : *Truth enunciated by an erring crowd.* As Jesus rode on the ass, the people “took off their garments,” &c. They spoke about Christ with one voice, and spoke the truth. They declared Him to be “a King.” They represented Him as coming in the “name of the Lord,” and spoke of “peace in heaven,” and “glory in the highest,” in connexion with His mission. Here you have the crowd, then, for *once* uttering truth. I know of no phrase ever coined by mortals more untrue than *vox populi vox Dei*. The voice of the people has almost always been the voice of selfishness—carnality—worldliness. It has been mostly the voice of the devil, seldom the voice of God. The people have generally rejected the best measures, the best men, the best books, the best

preachers. So long as the populace continue what they have been, God deliver us from popularity ! The vote of majorities is no proof either of truth or right. For this reason, even the law of a constitutional government, being but the public voice, is not necessarily right. Here, however, the people for once spoke the truth.

But our point at present is to look upon Christ in relation to the *religious feeling* of mankind. That man has the religious element is too obvious for proof, too trite for remark. It is the root-sentiment of his soul—the substratum of his nature. Man has senses, man has mental faculties, but man *is* religious. What relation does Christ sustain to this, the soul of man's soul ?

I. CHRIST ROUSES IT INTO ACTIVITY. "Blessed be the King," &c. This is an outburst of the *religious feeling*. Sometimes you hear the crowd thunder the feeling of revenge, or of loyalty, or of ambition ; but here it is the religious feeling that fills the air, and echoes through the roads. What roused this ? The appearance of Christ. But how does Christ wake the religious feeling of men ? By *revealing God*. As the sensation of sight could never be awakened without light, even though the eye existed in a perfect state, so the *feeling* of religion could not be excited without the idea of God. It is this alone that can touch the religious soul. Christ reveals God. First : *He reveals His law to the conscience*. He brings the Divine "commandment." Secondly : *He reveals His love to the heart*. He is the expression, evidence, and medium of the Divine love. Thirdly : *He reveals His beauty to the soul*. His perfections are His beauty. Christ unfolds them. "He is the brightness," &c. "The image," &c. In "him dwells all the fullness," &c.

II. CHRIST INSPIRES IT WITH GLADNESS. All the religious feeling which now expressed itself was *joyous*. It was not expressed in tears and groans, but in songs and shouts. The religious feeling is awakened in distant lands ; but it is not

inspired with gladness, it is all gloom and sadness. The religious feeling is either the source of man's greatest happiness or misery. But Christ sets the religious sentiment of the soul to music.

But how does Christ inspire it with joy? First: *He directs it to the right object of supreme affection.* Love is happiness. From an instinct in human nature, every man has some object of supreme affection; and this greatly determines his happiness or misery. The supreme object to make one happy, should be, *absolutely perfect—thoroughly happy—reciprocally loving—equal to all the emergencies of our existence—for ever inseparable from our being.* Such an object Christ gives—the INFINITE FATHER. Secondly: *He directs it to the sublimest objects of contemplation.* Contemplation is a condition of happiness. The attributes, claims, arrangements, works, and government of God are happy themes for thought. Thirdly: *He directs it to the happiest sphere of hope.* Hope is happiness. Every man has a sphere of hope, but all spheres but *one* doom him more or less to disappointment. Christ presents the highest blessings, with a certainty of their attainment. Fourthly: *He directs it into a delightful course of action.* Activity is a condition of happiness. Doing everything for the glory of God. The course of action to insure happiness must be felt to be *worthy of our nature—agreeable to our conscience—abundantly remunerative.* This is religious action. Thus Jesus inspires the religious feeling of men with gladness. His religion is not a gloomy thing. "I am come," said He, "that ye may have life."

III. CHRIST ENCOURAGES ITS EXPRESSION. "And some of the pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." First: *Christ encourages it despite the opposition of wicked men.* Wicked men have always been opposed to the expression of the religious

feelings of mankind. It has condemned their conduct, it has roused their consciences, it has broken their peace. The songs of Zion fall with a revolting discord upon the ears of the wicked. Hence persecution. Secondly : *Christ encourages it as a matter of utmost importance.* "If these should hold their peace, the very stones would cry out." The language implies two things : 1. That when properly excited the religious feeling *cannot* be repressed. The man who has it must speak it. Examples : Jeremiah, who felt it as fire shut up in his bones. Peter and John before the Sanhedrin—"we cannot," &c., said they. Paul and Silas in the prison. The spirits above cry it out vehemently—shout it in thundering strains of music. 2. That when properly excited the religious feeling *ought* not to be repressed. The feeling is right and it *should* manifest itself. Were it wrong Christ would repress it. A few days after this there was a burst of feeling that fell on the ear of Christ from the weeping women on His way to Calvary. It was improper and He repressed it : "Weep not for me." Pity for Him was not the right feeling—He was above that. The expression of the religious feeling, however, is always necessary and right. The world wants this Divine power in the soul so manifested as to put down the wrong. "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands."

SUBJECT :—*Divine Forgiveness.*

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins : and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."—Acts xiii. 38, 39.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Forty-first.

THE text suggests two facts concerning the Christian ministry. First : *That the character in which it is to address men is most gloomy.* That character is not that of sages or statesmen, &c., but sinners ; all condemned and needing for-

givenness. Secondly : *That the blessings which it presents to men is most glorious "Forgiveness."* The words enable us to look at forgiveness in three aspects.

I. AS THE GREAT WANT OF HUMANITY. What is it? It is sometimes spoken of in the Bible as the *cancelling* of a debt ; sometimes as a *reconciliation* ; sometimes as a *cleansing* from pollution ; and sometimes as *justification*. All these are figurative expressions, and are designed to express something common to them all. What is that ? *A merciful freedom from sin.* There are several points which mark human forgiveness from Divine. First : *Human forgiveness is always executed with great limitation.* Only one criminal out of a number is offered it—but Divine forgiveness is offered to all. Secondly : *Human forgiveness does not necessarily separate man from his antecedents.* The pardoned criminal may leave his cell with old habits and impulses—but the pardoned sinner not so. Thirdly : *Human forgiveness does not necessarily insure future obedience,* but Divine does—repentance or a change of heart is the condition. Fourthly : *Human forgiveness does not place the pardoned individual in a condition in society equal to that which he occupied before the crime.* His crime will always be attached to him in the opinion of society. Divine forgiveness raises man higher than he was before his fall.

Another aspect is :—

II. AS THE GREAT WANT SUPPLIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST. "Through this man." First : *Through this man in contradistinction to the abstract mercy of God.* God will not pardon without Christ. Secondly : *Through this man in contradistinction to our own merit.* Not for what we have done or can do. Thirdly : *Through this man in contradistinction to human priesthood.* No human priest can obtain it. Fourthly : *Through this man in contradistinction to all the merits or intercessions of the holiest of creatures.*

Another aspect is —

III. AS THE GREAT WANT SUPPLIED THROUGH CHRIST IN CONNECTION WITH TRUE FAITH. "All that believe," &c. This implies—First : *That there is some subject which we must credit.* Man can no more believe without a subject than he can see without light. What is the subject? Not the dogmas of man, nor the facts of science,—*But the testimony of God concerning his Son.* This implies—Secondly : *That the condition comes within the reach of all who have this testimony.* What sane man has not the power to believe? man, too, has a *propensity* to believe.

Another aspect is :—

IV. AS THE GREAT WANT SUPPLIED THROUGH CHRIST IN CONNECTION WITH TRUE FAITH TO THE GREATEST SINNERS. "Justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Under the law of Moses there were unpardonable sins, such as idolatry, adultery, &c.; but *all* sins may be forgiven through faith in Christ. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." ALL THAT BELIEVE FROM ALL SINS. Halleluia! Blessed be God for this truth!

SUBJECT :—*Eden : or, God's voice to Man on his entering his Earthly Sphere of Life.*

"Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat : But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it : for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Gen. ii. 16, 17.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Forty-second.

I. THAT MAN'S EARTHLY SPHERE OF LIFE IS FURNISHED WITH VAST AND VARIED BLESSINGS. "Of every tree," &c. There are many trees of pleasure for man in this life. First : *There is the sensational tree.* Material nature with its million branches is a tree all thickly clustered with fruit. Secondly :

There is the intellectual tree. Life is crowded with ideas—every form of life embodies them—every event starts them. Thirdly : *There is the social tree.* Society is a tree, and its fruits of reciprocal love and confidence are amongst the choicest blessings of earth. Fourthly : *There is the religious tree.* This gives its beauty and worth to all. What a rich garden is our earthly life !

II. THAT THESE VAST AND VARIED BLESSINGS ARE TO BE USED UNDER CERTAIN DIVINE REGULATIONS. “But of the tree,” &c. The whole garden is open to us, but we are not to use it as we please—our Maker has imposed a rule. First : *His regulations are proper.* He is the owner of one garden and its tenant too, and has an undoubted right to make regulations. Secondly : *His regulations are liberal.* Only “one tree” prohibited out of all. Thirdly : *His regulations are needful.* It is impossible for us to know the quality of all the trees, and which shall be “evil” and which “good.” The child needs the father to guide him through the garden, lest he should take into his system that which is pernicious and wrong.

III. THAT THE VIOLATION OF THESE DIVINE REGULATIONS WILL ENTAIL THE UTMOST RUIN. “Thou shalt surely die.” To disobey God is sin, and “the wages of sin is death.” What is corporeal death ? separation of soul from body : What is spiritual death ? the separation of the soul from God : and these, sin necessarily produces. In man’s earthly sphere of life, furnished as it is like a paradise, with the choicest fruit trees, there is one thing that will produce death, and but one—and that is, disobedience to the Divine command. This disobedience gives the *painful consciousness* of the distinction between “good and evil,” and insures death.

SUBJECT :—*The Educational Temple : or Christianity a School.*

“Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars; she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table. She hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city, Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.”—Prov. ix. 1—6.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Forty-third.

THE highest end the great Father of Spirit can have in His dealings with his intelligent and moral offspring is their *education*; the full and perfect development of all their powers in harmony with themselves and His everlasting will.

For this purpose, He has provided man with two schools—NATURE and CHRISTIANITY. The former is a magnificent school. All the true sciences of the world are but a few of the myriad lessons which *intelligent* pupils have learnt in the school of nature. The latter, Christianity, is reared to meet man's spiritual condition as a *fallen* creature. In nature, God is revealed as the Creator; in Christianity, as the Redeemer. Christianity does not *supersede* nature—on the contrary it trains man properly to study and appreciate it.

The text, we regard as a highly poetic representation of the school which WISDOM has reared for man in Christianity; and it leads us to notice—the *firmness of its structure*; the *adaptation of its provisions*; the *invitation of its messengers*; and the *blessedness of its aim*.

I. THE FIRMNESS OF ITS STRUCTURE. “She hath hewn out her seven pillars.” A pillar is the emblem of strength, and “seven” is the emblem of perfection. The idea, therefore, is—*perfect strength*. In what does the firmness of the Chris-

tian school consist? In its TRUTH. Its lessons are true to human instincts, to human experience, to human reason: true also to a man's deeply-felt moral wants as a sinner. The firmness of a school consists, then, in the truthfulness of its doctrines. Time, which will mar the beauty of the architecture of a school, and crumble its structure to dust, though built of marble or granite, can never touch its truth with "the breath of decay." The famed schools of Egypt and Greece are no more. They were ornaments and attractions in their day; upon them, Plato and Socrates, Aristotle and Pythagoras, shed the lustre of their genius: kings and heroes were their pupils. But they are gone. They did not deal in lessons *true* to man. Their metaphysical dreams and pompous hypotheses passed away as the intellect of the world advanced. But the school which "wisdom builded" by the hand of the Gallilean some eighteen centuries ago is as firm as ever. "The word of the Lord shall stand for ever."

II. THE ADAPTATION OF ITS PROVISIONS. "She hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine, she hath also furnished her table." The adaptation of the provisions is seen in two things, in their *nature*, and *variety*.

First: *In their nature*. The things specified here were the staple commodities of life among the Easterns. The idea suggested is, that *Christian* truths sustain a relation to the soul, analagous to the relation that the necessities of physical life do to the body. As the body could not live without the right appropriation of food, no more can the soul without the right appropriation of Christian truths. Christ taught this frequently. "He is the bread of life." Hence Christianity is represented as a feast. (Isa. xxv. 6;) (Matt. xxii. 2.) "This *is* life eternal, to know thee," &c.

The adaptation of the provisions is seen—

Secondly: *In their variety*. There is a variety in the provisions mentioned here: "beasts," "wine," "bread." Physiologists say, that man's body not only requires food, but a *variety* of food—animal and vegetable. Why else such a rich

variety of these productions in nature? and why else such an appetite for variety? Be this as it may, the Christian school presents this variety. There is truth here suited to every faculty and sentiment of our nature—intellectual truth, religious truth, moral truth, redemptive truth—truth for the past, truth for the future. The soul can no more be fed upon one doctrine, than the body upon one element. Some only regard a few dogmas, as food for the soul. The soul when once pardoned by God's grace, and renewed by God's Spirit, wants universal truth to feed on. The smallest flower that grows in your garden cannot feed upon any one element. It requires sun and air, soil and shower, and all the various gases of the world must lend their aid. And can the soul feed upon a few dogmas? No; nor need it. Christianity has provided a boundless variety.

III. THE INVITATION OF ITS MESSENGERS. "She hath sent forth her maidens, she crieth upon the highest places of the city. Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither," &c. First: *The invitation is earnest.* "She crieth." It is not a cold half-hearted, formal invitation. The Great Teacher, on the great day of the feast, stood and "cried." His messengers are commanded to go into the highways and hedges, and "compel." The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come," &c. Secondly: *The invitation is universal.* "Whoso." There is no restriction—the banquet is spread for all. There are a place and provision at the banquet for the sage as well as the rustic—for the old and the young. Provisions are suited to every class of mind. Truths, here, are sublime enough for the greatest philosopher, and simple enough for the untutored child. Plato had inscribed on the door of his school—"Let none but Geometricians enter here;" but on the portals of the Christian school is written—"Whoso is simple," &c.

IV. THE BLESSEDNESS OF ITS AIM. What is the great design of this school? It is to give life. "Forsake the

foolish, and live." There are some schools that *kill*—kill the love enquiry; kill the moral sensibility. But this is a life-giving school. First: *Its lessons are most quickening*. What so adapted to quicken the downcast energies of the soul as the doctrine of Christianity? Secondly: *Its teachers are most quickening*. A dull teacher, without genius and inspiration, will make his pupil dull, even though he deal in the most quickening truths. But prophets and apostles are full of genius and life: "they are full of the Holy Ghost that quickeneth all things." "Christ is life."

Brothers, let us learn from this the relation which we should sustain to this Divine Temple of education. We should all be *learning*, for it has doctrines which the most wise has not yet comprehended; we should all be *teachers*, for few in the Temple are so ignorant as not to be able to impart a something of which others are ignorant: we should all be *inviters*—go into the streets as messengers of wisdom, crying upon the highest place in the city, "Whoso is simple let him come in *hither*."

SUBJECT :—*The Devout Soul, and Nature.*

"And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spoke unto us; it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God."—Josh. xxiv. 26, 27.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Forty-fourth.

SOLEMNITY of the occasion. Joshua was a dying man: he had triumphantly led the children of Israel into the Land of Promise, and before dismissing them, "Each one to his inheritance," he calls together the whole nation, and tells them, "Choose ye this day whom you will serve." Here we have—First: *A wise effort to impress and perpetuate religious*

resolutions. "Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God, *and took a great stone,*" &c. Horace's celebrated maxim applies—"Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem," &c. Things heard have enormous power it is true, but their effect afterwards depends upon *memory*, which is often treacherous, but a visional object, open to general inspection, remains like the Bow in the Cloud. He not only wrote, but took a stone, a great stone—"a great stone under an oak." The mineral and vegetable kingdoms combine to bring their most imperishable objects to witness a religious covenant—"that was by the sanctuary of the Lord." The Covenant, then, was a *religious* one. Here we have—Secondly: *A fine impersonation of material nature.* "It hath heard all the words," &c. There is something very splendid in thus choosing a witness and an *auditor* from the domain of nature herself.

The passage teaches—

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS RESOLUTIONS. They are worthy of perpetual remembrance. The world has monuments of earthquakes, wars, and deaths. But how few monuments of devout resolutions. And what so important as religious vows?

II. THE HIGHEST USE OF MATERIAL OBJECTS. Without actually *setting* up material objects, nature might be *appropriated* in her different manifestations as types of God's character, and as mementoes of events in the religious history of an individual or a family. This surely is the highest use of nature.

III. THE MOST SOLEMN ASPECTS OF NATURE. Who dares to say that nature can't hear and speak. The Prophet calls upon the Heavens and the Earth to hear the Lord's controversy. And who shall tell the ultimate effect? Nature is *now* dumb—but, says Christ, "I tell you, if these should hold their peace the very stones would cry out." The

domains of nature and grace are not opposed. They are designed to illustrate and supplement each other, and *will* do so. Nature, now, for our sakes is under a curse, "But the earnest expectation of the creation," &c. Who shall say at the last, what nature, after her long silence, shall reveal? Take heed what you do say—*stones may hear without a Joshua's invocation.*

Poets invoke nature now to illustrate and witness truth; Christians invoke nature to deepen their impressions of truth: impenitent sinners will one day invoke nature to hide from the God of truth—"calling on the rocks and hills to cover them."

L. L. B.

SUBJECT:—*Elijah in the Cave.*

"And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?" &c.—1 Kings xix. 9-14.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Forty-fifth.

THIS strange narrative serves to illustrate the following things:—

I. THE FALLIBILITY OF AN EMINENT SAINT. Elijah was undoubtedly an eminent saint. His teachings, miracles, prayers, and the testimony of God's word show this. But he was not perfect, and the fact of his fleeing to the cave shows this. Why did he retire to solitude? First: *The want of success.* We are not judges of success. Nor is success the right rule of life. Secondly: *The corruptness of his times.* The very reason why, he of all men should be out in public life. Thirdly: *The fear of persecution.*

II. THE MINUTENESS OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE. God knew where he was. First: *God knows everything about the individual man.* Jacob at Bethel. Jonah on the Sea. Moses at

Midian. John in Patmos, and now Elijah in the cave. Secondly : *God demands from individual man an account of himself.* "What doest thou here?" (1) Thou art a reasonable being and must have reasons for thy conduct. What are they? (2) Thou art a moral being and art responsible to me for thy conduct. Providence has to do with the most *minute* as well as the most *vast*.

III. THE ORDER OF DIVINE PROCEDURE. Elijah was visited by "a great and strong wind, which rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks; and after the wind an earthquake, and after the earthquake a fire." This terrible manifestation came first. Then came the "still small voice." First : *This is a type of God's dispensations with the race at large.* First came the terrible, and then the more pacific. Judaism is the terrible—Christianity the mild. "Ye are not come to the mount that might be touched," &c. Secondly. *This is a type of God's dealing with his people individually.* There must first come the storm, earthquake, and fire of moral conviction; and then the still small voice, &c.

IV. THE FORCE OF PACIFIC AGENCY. First : *The pacific is most manifestly Divine.* The Lord was not in the wind, &c. But he was in the still small voice. God is a "God of peace." *Nature shows this.* Storms are exceptions. *The history of Christ shows this.* "He did not cause his voice to be heard," &c. *The influence of His Gospel shows this.* Secondly : *The pacific is most morally effective.* It was the still small voice that reached the heart of Elijah. He wrapped his face in his mantle, &c. It is not the thunder and the lightning that clothe the fields with the verdure and beauty of life; but the noiseless dew-drop and the quiet sunbeam. Neither the thunders of civil law, nor the fulminations of a heartless declaimer can touch the soul. Nothing can travel to her seat but the gentle message of the truth in love. "Thy gentleness hath made me great."

SUBJECT :—*The Ark : a Word to Parents.*

“Come thou and all thy house into the ark.”—Gen. vii. 1.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Forty-sixth.

I. THERE IS AN AWFUL PERIL HANGING OVER YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN. As in the case of the Antediluvians the peril is—First : *Divinely threatened.* Secondly : *Generally disbelieved.* Thirdly : *Absolutely certain.* II. THERE IS SALVATION PROVIDED FOR YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN. The Ark is ready. First : *It is Divinely constituted.* Secondly : *It is all-sufficient.* Thirdly : *It is popularly neglected.* III. THERE IS A SOLEMN OBLIGATION RESTING UPON YOU IN RELATION TO YOUR CHILDREN. You are to bring them into the Ark. “Come thou and all thy house.” First : *If you do not care for them, who do you expect will ?* Secondly : *If you cannot induce them to come, who do you expect can ?*

Old Standards and New ;

OR,

GENUINE AND SHAM ORTHODOXY.

BISHOP PEARSON.

OUR readers may remember, that, some months since, JOHN OWEN appeared first in our gallery of heretics. Next, as was fitting, the Episcopal RICHARD HOOKER was hung as a fellow to the Puritan. Opposite was placed the nonconforming JOHN HOWE ; and now, according to precedent, we affix PEARSON as an appropriate pendant. We shall have as little difficulty in establishing his claim to the place as we have had with any one of the others.

Revelation.

“EVIDENCE OF REVELATION.—Those persons to whom God did reveal himself, did, by virtue of the same *Revelation* perceive, know, and assure themselves that he which spake to them was God.” *

* Exposition of the Creed. Article 1.

"INTERNAL REVELATION.—The same Spirit which revealeth the object of Faith generally to the Universal Church of God, which object is propounded externally by the Church to every particular believer, doth also illuminate the understanding of such as believe that they may receive the truth. ——— As the increase and perfection, so the original, or initiation of faith is from the Spirit of God, not only by an external proposal in the word, but by an internal illumination in the soul; by which we are inclined to the obedience of faith, in assenting to those truths which unto a natural and carnal man are foolishness." *

Manicheism Denied.

"There is no nature originally sinful, no substance in itself evil, and therefore no being which may not come from the same fountain of goodness." †

"GOD AND THE CREATURE.—For though he cannot receive any real benefit or utility from the creature, yet he can and doth in a manner receive that which hath some similitude or affinity with it." ‡

"MAN BY NATURE THE CHILD OF GOD.—Of merely natural beings and irrational agents he is the Creator—of rational, as so, the Father also; they are his creatures, these his sons. Hence he is styled the Father of Spirits, and the blessed angels, when he laid the foundations of the earth, his sons; 'when the morning-stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy:' hence man, whom he created after his own image, is called his 'offspring,' and Adam, the immediate work of his hands, 'the son of God:' hence may we all cry out with the Israelites, taught by the prophet so to speak, 'Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?'—Mal. ii. 10. §

The Person of Christ.

"CHRIST A MAN.—Vain was that old conceit of Eutyches, who thought the union to be made so in the natures, that the humanity was absorpt and wholly turned into the Divinity, so that by that transubstantiation the human nature had no longer being." **

"COMMUNICATION OF PROPERTIES.—If the properties of the divine nature may be truly attributed to that man which is God, then may those actions which flow from those properties be attributed to the same. And being the properties of the human nature may be also attributed to the Eternal Son of God, those actions or passions which did proceed from those properties may be attributed to the same Son of God, or God the Son. Wherefore as God the Son is truly man,

* Art. VIII. † Art. I. ‡ Ibid. § Ibid. ** Art. III.

and as man truly passible and mortal; so God the Son did truly suffer, and did truly die. And this is the only true communication of properties." *

The Trinity.

"ETERNAL GENERATION OF THE SON.—The divine essence which Christ had as the Word, before he was conceived by the Virgin Mary, he had not of himself, but by communication from God the Father. For this is not to be denied, that there can be but one essence properly divine, and so but one God of infinite wisdom, power, and majesty; that there can be but one person originally of himself subsisting in that infinite Being, because a plurality of more persons so subsisting would necessarily infer a multiplicity of Gods; that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is originally God, as not receiving his eternal being from any other. Wherefore it necessarily followeth that Jesus Christ, who is certainly not the Father, cannot be a Person subsisting in the Divine nature originally of himself, and consequently, being we have already proved that he is truly and properly the eternal God, he must be understood to have the Godhead communicated to him by the Father, who is not only eternally, but originally, God." †

"He hath begotten him by way of eternal generation in the same Divinity and Majesty with himself: by which Paternity, coæval to the Deity, I acknowledge him [the first Person] always Father, as much as always God." ‡

"God the Father hath communicated to the Word the same divine essence by which he is God; and consequently he is of the same nature with him, and therefore the perfect image and similitude of him, and therefore his proper Son." §

"SUBORDINATION OF THE SON.—In general we may safely observe that in the very name of Father there is something of eminence which is not in that of Son; and some kind of priority we must ascribe unto him whom we call the first, in respect of whom we term the second Person: and as we cannot but ascribe it, so we must endeavour to preserve it." **

"The First is a Father indeed by reason of his Son, but he is not God by reason of him; whereas the Son is not so only in regard of the Father, but also God by reason of the same." ††

"The difference properly consisteth in this, that as the branch is from the root, and river from the fountain, and by their origination from them receive that being which they have; whereas the root receiveth nothing from the branch, or fountain from the river: so the Son is from the Father, receiving his subsistence by generation

* Art. IV. † Art. II. ‡ Art. I. § Art. II. ** Art. I. †† Ibid.

from him; the Father is not from the Son, as being what he is from none." *

"PROCESSION OF THE SPIRIT.—Our sixth and last assertion (sufficient to manifest the nature of the Holy Ghost, as he is the Spirit of God) teacheth that Spirit to be a Person proceeding from the Father and the Son. ——— Now this procession of the Spirit in reference to the Father is delivered expressly, in relation to the Son, is contained virtually in the Scriptures." †

"SUBORDINATION IN THE TRINITY.—If there were more than one which were from none, it could not be denied that there were more Gods than one. Wherefore this origination in the Divine Paternity hath anciently been looked upon as the assertion of the Unity: and therefore the Son and Holy Ghost have been believed to be but one God with the Father, because both from the Father, who is one, and so the union of them." ‡

"In this relation, [Paternity] I profess that eminence and priority, that as he [the Father] is the Original cause of all things as created by him, so is he the fountain of the Son begotten of him, and of the Holy Ghost proceeding from him." §

The Sufferings of Christ.

"God 'laid on his own Son the iniquities of us all;' and as we are obliged to be sorry for our particular sins, so was he grieved for the sins of us all. If, then, we consider the perfection and latitude of his knowledge; he understood all the sins of men for which he suffered, all the evil and the guilt, all the offence against the majesty, and ingratitude against the goodness of God, which was contained in all those sins. If we look upon his absolute conformity to the will of God; he was inflamed with most ardent love, he was most zealous of his glory, and most studious to preserve that right which was so highly violated by those sins. If we look upon his relation to the sons of men, he loved them all far more than any did themselves; he knew those sins were of themselves sufficient to bring eternal destruction on their souls and bodies; he considered them whom he so much loved as lying under the wrath of God whom he so truly worshipped. If we reflect upon those graces which were without measure diffused through his soul, and caused him with the greatest habitual detestation to abhor all sin: if we consider all these circumstances, we cannot wonder at that grief and sorrow; for if the true contrition of one single sinner, bleeding under the sting of the Law only for his own iniquities, all which notwithstanding he knoweth not, cannot be performed without great bitterness of sorrow and remorse; what bounds can we set unto that grief—what measures to that anguish,

which proceedeth from a full apprehension of all the transgressions of so many millions of sinners?" *

The Descent of Christ into Hell.

"We must confess that the Soul of Christ was in Hell, and no Christian can deny it, saith St. Augustine." Epist. 99. †

"The Soul of Christ, really separated from his body by death, did truly pass unto the places below where the souls of men departed were; and I conceive the end for which he did so, was, that he might undergo the condition of a dead man as well as of a living. He appeared here in the similitude of sinful flesh, and went into the other world in the similitude of a sinner. — By the descent of Christ into Hell all those which believe in him are secured from descending thither; he went unto those regions of darkness that our souls might never come into those torments which are there. By his descent he freed us from our fears." ‡

The Power of Christ's Resurrection.

"The resurrection of Christ is the cause of our resurrection by a double causality, as an efficient, and as an exemplary cause. As an efficient cause, in regard our Saviour, by and upon his resurrection, hath obtained power and right to raise all the dead. — As an exemplary cause, in regard that all the saints of God shall rise after the similitude and in conformity to the resurrection of Christ." §

The Blessed Mary, ever Virgin.

"The Blessed Virgin. — There can be nothing found to raise the least suspicion of any interruption of the ever-blessed Mary's perpetual virginity; for as she was a virgin when she conceived, and after she brought forth our Saviour, so did she continue in the same state and condition, and was commended by our Saviour to his beloved disciple as a mother only now of an adopted son." **

Mysticism.

"Nor are we only informed by the necessary dependency of all things on God, as effects upon their universal cause, or his external patefactions unto others, and the consentient acknowledgement of mankind; but every particular person hath a particular remembrancer in himself, as a sufficient testimony of his Creator, Lord, and Judge. We know there is a great force of conscience in all men, by which their 'thoughts' are ever 'accusing, or excusing them;' they feel a comfort in those virtuous actions which they find themselves to have wrought according to their rule—a sting and secret remorse for all

* Art. IV. † Art. V. ‡ Ibid. § Ibid. ** Art. III.

vicious acts and impious machinations. Nay, those who strive most to deny a God, and to obliterate all sense of Divinity out of their own souls, have not been least sensible of this remembrancer in their breasts." *

"In this great temple of the world, in which the Son of God is the High Priest, the heaven which we see is but the veil, and that which is above, the Holy of Holies. This veil, indeed, is rich and glorious, but one day to be rent, and then to admit us into a far greater glory, even to the mercy-seat and cherubims." †

"The Olive was the first of trees mentioned as fit for Sovereignty, in regard of its 'fatness, wherewith they honour God and man.'"—Judg. ix. 9. ‡

"We must not look upon the Divine nature as sterile, but rather acknowledge and admire the fecundity and communicability of itself. ——— Animals, when they come to the perfection of nature, then become prolific; in God, eternal perfection showeth his eternal fecundity." §

Eternal Life in this World.

"I call that eternal life *initial*, which is obtained in this life, and is as it were an earnest of that which is to follow." **

Creation Proper not proven by Genesis.

"Not that the Hebrew word used by Moses 'In the beginning God *created* the heaven and earth,' hath of itself any such peculiar acceptation. For it is often used synonymously with words which signify any kind of production or formation, and by itself it seldom denotes a production out of nothing, or proper creation, but most frequently the making of one substance out of another pre-existing, as the fishes of the water, and man of the dust of the earth; the renovating or restoring anything to its former perfection, for want of Hebrew words in composition; or, lastly, the doing some new or wonderful work, the producing some strange and admirable effect—as the opening the mouth of the earth, and the signal judgments on the people of Israel."

"We must not, therefore, weakly collect the true nature of creation from the force of any word which by some may be thought to express so much, but we must collect it from the testimony of God the Creator, in his word, and of the world created, in our reason." ††

Thus, then, it must be evident to the satisfaction of the unprejudiced and discerning reader, that the celebrated expounder of the Creed, judged by modern standards, was a

* Art. I. † Ibid. ‡ Art. II. § Ibid. ** Art. XII. †† Art. I

teacher of false doctrine, and that, consequently, all his disciples—who alas! are numerous—have been unconsciously imbibing poison. We say, that if we judge by modern standards, we cannot avoid this decision; for the old standards and the new can by no ingenuity ever be twisted into agreement. If, then, we are to have a human standard at all, which shall he be—the empty Sir Oracle of the day, or the calm, sagacious, and learned, John, BISHOP OF CHESTER?

LITERARY NOTICES.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the Author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY. By GEORGE HENRY LEWES. Library Edition. John W. Parker and Son.

QUIET HOURS. By the Rev. JOHN PULSFORD. Second Edition. Edinburgh: Thomas C. Jack. London: Hamilton, Adams and Co.

WE have put these two together, not by reason of any resemblance between them, but for their great unlikeness to each other. Could their authors, by some hitherto unknown process of spiritual chymistry, be combined, we might obtain as the result a man more clearly approaching perfection than either. Philosophy being, as Mr. Lewes thinks, dead and buried, he has written her biography. We are not, however, quite sure that we and Mr. Lewes should agree about her identity, and it is plain that he does not always agree with himself. Ten years ago, he placed it in her aspiration to know certain objects, namely, essences and causes. Now, he is disposed to look upon method as the vital question. Hitherto, some people, not

among the *elite* of humanity," have been simple enough to suppose philosophy a science, and the science of sciences—the science of knowledge and being; but, it seems, they have been mistaken. Philosophy, according to Mr. Lewes, neglects verification; while science verifies every step, and verifies the result. To begin by saying that Philosophy is indifferent to verification, and thence to infer her untrustworthiness, is easy. The inference proceeds on the axiom, that what is uncertified is uncertain. But we question whether many will be found willing to acquiesce in the definition. Mr. Lewes himself does not always use the word philosophy in this sense. It seems to us, that he has also been sometimes unconsciously betrayed by a favourite theory into seeing meanings in passages from the philosophers, which their authors never dreamed of. An instance of this occurs on page 45, in the strained translation of a passage from Parmenides, the last three lines of which will hardly bear the interpretation given. The work, however, awakens and sustains intense interest, in part by the author's erudition, and in part by his intelligent and fascinating treatment of the subjects. It is, moreover, in agreement with the present complexion of the English mind. This Library Edition differs greatly from the former. The work has been so far re-written and enlarged, that it may be almost regarded as new. It has a more academic air than before, though it is written from the same point of view. Philosophy receives respect but not confidence. She is represented as mistaken, though not foolish, and as the indispensable precursor of science, rendering immense benefit to the world. It is generally known that Mr. Lewes is a disciple of Auguste Comte. We should not be surprised if the stately funeral they have given to Philosophy should after all prove a case of premature burial; or at least, if one of these days they were startled by her resurrection.

If a mystic is known by his disposition to "invest all things, great and small, with the noblest of all associations," then the author of *QUIET HOURS* is eminently a mystic. From the unmeaning nonentities of the teeming modern press this book starts out with a dignified character of its own, stamped thereon by genuine godliness, vigorous intellect, rich and elegant imagination, and rare faculty of speech. The "Aids to Thought" remind men of the "Fragments" of Novalis, and the Sermons which alternate with the former are priceless jewels. Amongst these sparkles most brightly that which is inscribed with "Jesus revealing the heart of God," which we are glad to find is circulating separately. Yet this book has grave faults, and such as, in our opinion, are calculated to limit its service to the comparatively few who can appropriate the wholesome and reject the injurious. We had hoped that Manicheism was exploded, at least among theologians,

by the force of the conviction, that "every creature of God is good," and, that "that which goeth into the mouth defileth not the man." We think that in a book of professedly Christian teaching, doctrines should not be mingled which savour rather of Swedenborg or Böhme than of the Bible. The world, we think, has already had too much of the kind of religious philosophy which appears here and there in these pages. It may be pleasing to speculators, but is remote from the wants of common life. Good and evil, sin and holiness, God's forgiving mercy, Christ's atonement, the Spirit's grace—are topics needed by our common nature, which to deal with profoundly and practically Mr. Pulsford were eminently fitted, would he neglect the visions of the Swedish seer and of the mystic shoemaker of Gürlitz, in favour of prophets, evangelists, and apostles.

A MANUEL OF RELIGION, AND OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. By KARL GOTTLIEB BRETSCHNEIDER. Translated from the German. Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts.

A MANUAL of religious knowledge for young men, destined for or engaged in, secular employment, is much needed; but whatever the excellences of this work, which are great and numerous, we fear, that on account partly of its too scholastic form, and partly of the sentiments which it teaches, it cannot be recommended for general use. The author's name is famous in Germany, and is not unknown in England. He was born in 1776, and died in 1848. He was what is called a Rational Supranaturalist; that is, he mediated between the extremes of men like Strauss—his refutation of whom is crushing—and of such as Hengstenberg. He was an accomplished theologian, familiarly acquainted with the ancient and the modern lore, and at once penetrating and comprehensive in thought. His chief works were—*Handbook of the Dogmatic Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, which it is erudition to have read. *Doctrine of Religious Faith, according to Reason and Revelation, for Intelligent Readers*—*The Basis of Evangelical Pietism, or the Doctrines of Adam's Fall, Original Sin, and the Sacrifice of Christ*—*Systematic Development, according to the Symbolic Books, of all the Notions which occur in Dogmatic Theology*—*Manual Lexicon to the New Testament*. We are sorry that we cannot recommend the present volume for perusal beyond the circle of theologians. For these, however, the study, not of this only, but of the author's other works, were eminently profitable, by reason especially of his scientific method, and manifest honesty of intention. The idea of this manual is excellent, and

it is much to be desired, that the same were taken up by some English divine—if such exists—of equal genius and attainments, but of greater doctrinal catholicity.

THE SHEKINAH: OR, THE PRESENCE AND MANIFESTATION OF JEHOVAH,
&c. By WILLIAM COOKE. J. B. Cooke.

THIS excellent book conducts an inquiry into the nature and office of the Shekinah, so often mentioned in Scripture, which is traced from Paradise, through the Patriarchal and Mosaic ages, to the Incarnation of Deity in Christ, to the Spirit that dwells in believers, to the last judgment, and finally, to Heaven. Subjoined are essays on the related topics of the Cherubim and the Urim and Thummim. The inquiry is conducted in a reverent and scientific spirit, and not only is the result instructive, but the process is full of suggestion. Perhaps, if a chapter had been added on the relation of the Shekinah to revelation in general, it would have been an improvement to the work. In some passages the writing is too diffuse. But would there were more books of this kind, dignified and sober, yet alive with thought, and seeking truth unshrinkingly and patiently! Men would then have to acknowledge, that the science of theology was still alive in this country, and following that historical method which alone is sure.

DAVID, KING OF ISRAEL.—THE DIVINE PLAN AND LESSONS OF HIS LIFE. By the Rev. WILLIAM GARDEN BLAICKIE, A.M. Edinburgh: Constable and Co. London: Hamilton, Adams and Co.

CHRIST IN THE WILDERNESS: OR, PRACTICAL VIEWS OF OUR LORD'S TEMPTATION. By LUKE H. WISEMAN. John Mason.

LIGHT FROM THE CROSS.—SERMONS ON THE PASSION OF OUR LORD. Translated from the German of Dr. A. THOLUCK. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark. London: Hamilton, Adams and Co.

DAVID'S richly endowed nature, his important historical position, and his chequered outer and inner life, together with those unrivalled Psalms which have furnished an instrument at once for the utterance and development of the piety of succeeding saints,—an instrument employed and honoured by Christ himself, the Son of David, have endeared him to all generations of the Church. His life and character, recklessly assailed by some, and unscrupulously

defended by others, are here subjected to a careful, candid and discriminating examination and criticism, and receive an estimate, on the whole, just. Such a service was greatly needed. We cordially recommend the volume as desirable for the library of the preacher and of every intelligent believer. Our own experience testifies to its suggestiveness—the rarest of book qualities; for it has started within us trains of thought out of which we have wrought not a few discourses.

CHRIST IN THE WILDERNESS is an exposition of the evangelic narrative of that important crisis in his history. The critical, though not neglected, is subordinated to the practical; and the book, though not either in profundity of thought or choiceness of diction, able to rank with the best of its class, will, by the liveliness of its manner, commend itself to a wide circle of readers.

PROFESSOR THOLUCK'S work consists of two series of sermons; the first, illustrating in a very interesting way the fact, as the author expresses it, that the cross is a revealer of the hearts of men. This is done by seven examples from the evangelic narrative of persons who were brought variously into relation with Jesus, and whose characters were thus manifested, at or near the time of his crucifixion. The second series consists of fifteen discourses on the last scenes in the life of Jesus. Each subject is placed so as to catch light from every direction, and thus to draw forth in the reader that appropriate feeling which has evidently been first experienced by the author. These discourses have been, it seems, all selected from the fourth and fifth volumes of Dr. Tholuck's sermons. They are Halle University Sermons, but are not exclusively adapted to students. The translation reads well.

AN ANALYTICAL CONCORDANCE TO THE HOLY SCRIPTURES; OR THE BIBLE PRESENTED UNDER DISTINCT AND CLASSIFIED HEADS OR TOPICS. Edited by JOHN EADIE, D.D., LL.D., &c. London and Glasgow. Richard Griffin and Co.

THIS book ought to lie on every minister's table. It is a concordance, not of words, but of subjects, such that you have the various passages which relate to any particular subject arranged under the proper word, which you have only to look for in its alphabetical place. There are a synopsis and an index, that if a difficulty occur with the concordance itself, it may be removed by them. The Work is based on that of old Mathew Talbot of Leeds, and the obligation is acknowledged. The idea is excellent, and, as will at once be evident to the theologian, of great significance. A book of this genus might be so constructed as to be of more value for theological purposes than

all the Fathers and Schoolmen—a theological manual; and again, it might be contented with the lower aim of enabling you to find the passages you want under any head. The present work performs the meaner service well, but only hints at the other. Although not the only book constructed on the plan, it is the best of several that we have examined, and we earnestly recommend it to all preachers, and to all students of the Scriptures.

THE UNSEALED PROPHECY. LECTURES ON THE REVELATION OF ST. JOHN. BY ROBERT SKEEN. George Berger.

ANOTHER commentary on the Apocalypse! This comes from a Moravian, who speaks in that peculiar tone of love and piety, which give to his church much of her interesting character. There are in these Lectures many original expositions, particularly of single sentences, which are worthy of consideration. It had, however, we think, been well for the worthy author, before commencing to set forth his own conceptions of the general structure of the Book and the meaning of its prophecies, to have read the Rev. John H. Godwin's very admirable, though unpretending, little volume, entitled, "The Apocalypse of St. John. A New Translation, metrically arranged, with Scripture Illustrations," which, without professing to be a commentary, throws, in our opinion, more light on the marvellous Patmos Revelation than is done by any Commentary whatever.

ON EDUCATION IN ITS CONSTITUENTS, OBJECTS, AND ISSUES. A Series of Essays and Lectures. By WILLIAM M'COMBIE. Aberdeen: George and Robert King. London: Hamilton, Adams and Co. and Ward and Co.

EDUCATION is the proper and methodical development of man by man. Since it cannot but be right for man to be developed, that he may take his place in the great social organism; education is natural to man—it is the unalienable right of the raw humanity, it is the office of the mature. Moreover, in order to succeed, the educator must know what he is aiming at, that is, what the developed man is like—he must be acquainted with mental science. Such are some of the principles taught in this book of vigorous and profound thought, on one of the most momentous topics of the age, and indeed of all ages. Related subjects are also discussed in appended Lectures. Were this volume to be read by all teachers of Sunday and week-day Schools, and by all promoters of education, the benefit can hardly be estimated.

THE GREAT SERMONS OF THE GREAT PREACHERS; OR, THE MASTERPIECES OF PULPIT ELOQUENCE OF ALL AGES AND COUNTRIES.—
Parts I. & II. Ward and Lock, Fleet Street.

THIS Work, of which two Parts are now before us, is to contain the masterpiece of the Greek and Roman, Mediæval, and later Byzantine,—the English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh—the German, French, American, and Negro, Pulpits. In these will appear the choicest productions of Cyprian, Athanasius, Chrysostom, Augustine, Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Masillon, Flechier, Abbadie, Taylor, Barrow, Robert Hall, Richard Watson, Chalmers, Christmas Evans, Edwards, Davies, &c. The greatest sermons of the greatest preachers have been the greatest powers in the world. They have achieved victories, and wrought reformations, that in worth and glory, have no parallel in the history of mankind. They have “subdued kingdoms” and wrought righteousness. This work, when completed, will be a moral armory where the modern soldier of the cross may inspect those old weapons which flashed in many a fierce battle, and which, in the hand of the heroic fathers, won many a brilliant conquest. We hail this work ourselves, and earnestly commend it to our ministerial readers. It is well got up, and remarkably cheap. Here, we have nine discourses, with an admirable historical sketch of the Greek and Latin pulpit, and also a brief account of the life of each of the great preachers for one shilling—sixpence each part.

EVENINGS WITH JESUS; a Series of Devotional Readings for the Closet and the Family. By the late Rev. WILLIAM JAY, of Bath. John Farquhar Shaw.—These, which are intended to correspond with the previous “Mornings with Jesus,” consist of short meditations on passages of Scripture for every evening in the year, and closely resemble the “Exercises” published during the lifetime of the venerable author. They have the like genial piety, the like felicity of expression. As the former works have been long before the public, and are well known, we need say no more.—THE PASTOR’S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE’S WEAL. A Practical Exposition of St. Paul’s Prayer for the Ephesians. iii. 14—21. By JAMES SPENCE, D.D. James Nisbet and Co.—The author is the talented and highly-esteemed minister of the Poultry Chapel, and these Reflections on Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians are intended as a sort of pastoral address. The author’s piety, vigorous thinking, and good sense, fit the little book for extensive service.—LETTERS TO THE WORKING CLASSES ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS. By One of Themselves. Glasgow: W. R. M’Phun. London: Hall and Co.—These are written with honesty of purpose

and force of reasoning. Their design is to counteract the infidelity and atheism which largely exist among the working classes. The first letter is occupied with the Being of God—the second, with the History of the Old Testament—the third, with that of the New—the fourth, with alleged Contradictions in Scripture, and the fifth, with Miracles. The author is a man of ability, and has read diligently. Though abounding with minor errors, many of them of the press, the work does him great credit, is a valuable addition to a class of books not sufficiently numerous, and ought to be widely circulated in the region of the more ignorant infidelity.—KANSAS: or Squatter Life and Border Warfare in the Far West. By THOMAS H. GLADSTONE. G. Routledge and Co.—The substance of this most interesting volume has already appeared in the form of letters in “The Times.” An eye to see, a heart to feel, and a pen to describe, have combined for its composition. It contains singular information on the important social and political questions which are agitating the young country, and are watched with the deepest interest by the old, as well as much that is valuable on the modes of life and manners in the extreme West. The book is instinct with a warm, deep, unmawkish philanthropy, and radiant with much literary excellence. we are glad to know that the blow it deals against slavery—the black curse resting on America—is being widely and deeply felt. May other blows succeed until the monster fall! POLITICAL SKETCHES: Twelve Chapters on the Struggles of the Age. By CARL RETSLAG. Robert Theobald. Written in English by a German, and therefore to be judged leniently in regard to style. The book shows how Germans can think on political questions, whatever they may do or leave undone.—HANDEL; his life, personal and professional. By Mrs. BRAY. Ward and Co. We suppose that they who wish to read a full life of the great German-English musician will procure M. Schœlcher. Some, however, may have heard his music, and desire to know something about his life and character, who have neither time nor money for a large work. Such may find what they want in this little book.—THE WAY TO THE CROSS; or How to become a Christian.—A CHRISTIAN PROFESSION: Its Design and Obligation. By the Rev. F. S. WILLIAMS. Judd and Glass. Plain, practical little books, whose wide and judicious dissemination might be of service.



A HOMILY

ON

Gospel Theology.

“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”—Heb. ix. 13, 14.

VAST is the difference between the theology which you get from the systems, even of the most orthodox divines, and that which you get directly from the Gospel. In the former, you have form with scarcely any substance, and that little substance, dry, uninteresting, and often repulsive; in the latter, you have all substance with scarcely any form, and that substance always beautiful to the moral taste and nutritious to the soul. The theology you get directly from the Gospel is, as compared with that you get from human books, like the flowers scattered over the landscape, delighting all with their beauty and their fragrance, compared to the *hortus siccus* of the botanist;—like the translucent river starting from unknown heights and winding its way towards the ocean, touching into life the scenery through which it passes, compared to the little stagnant pool, muddy, and generating the elements of disease. Let us, brothers, deaf to the oracular and conflicting pronouncements of theological Rabbis, keep our ears ever open to the words of the “Great Shepherd,”—learn to “know” his “voice” and follow him into “green pastures and beside the still waters.” Gospel theology is not the elaboration of the human brain; it flows

naturally from the facts and statements of the Gospel at the touch of devout and honest thought. It is not truth as found in human logic—it is truth “as it is in Jesus,”—the living, loving, personal Christ.

These remarks are suggested by the passage before us; a passage which in the fewest words, and most informal way, expresses the most vital doctrines of the Christian system. How prolific is Scripture! As from the acorn you might evolve forests; so from many sentences of God’s word you might elaborate volumes of theological thought. In this verse, for example, you have some of the foundation facts of Gospel theology; and it shall be our present purpose briefly to educe and illustrate them in their natural and consecutive order.

The passage teaches—

I. THAT THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL IS A LIVING PERSONALITY. Paul speaks of Him as the “living God”—Christ, as the “living Father.” In the Old Testament, good men, to make their words more solemn and powerful, appealed to the living God. “As the Lord liveth,” said they. The Eternal Himself, to give force to His influence over men, appeals to his own life. “As I live, saith the Lord.” The fact of a living God was the great fact in the consciousness of Bible saints. It was the key-note of their Psalms—they struck their anthems to Him who was “the fountain of life”: it was the burden of their prayer—they “cried out for the living God.” In truth, they were sustained, under trial, by the assurance that God their “Redeemer liveth.”

This Gospel revelation of God, as “living,” stands opposed to that of *heathen idolatry*. The heathen have “gods, many, and lords, many”; but none of their deities have the pulse of life—they have neither power of feeling nor action:—they are but dead dust. It stands opposed to that of *secular philosophy*. The God of mere secular science is a shadowy abstraction, not a living personality: “law,” “nature,” “order”—these are its supreme existences. It stands opposed to that of mere *logical divinity*. The “Systems of divinity,” as they are called, abound

with sundry propositions about a God, but do not give us the full living God that warms every page of the Bible with His inspiring breath, and brightens it with the effulgence of His being. They divide the Infinite into attributes, and dogmatize about His methods of action—they do not, they cannot represent Himself. They rather represent a God that has been than is—one who, six thousand years ago, worked as a Creator for six days, and then finished; rather than as an everlasting fountain of life, pouring forth new existences, worlds, and systems every moment; one who dwelt with, and inspired, the patriarchs and apostles of distant ages, and in other lands—rather than as one who is living and striving with men's spirits now, checking and destroying the evil, originating and developing the good.

The royal psalmist said "my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God." What his heart and flesh cried out for, the heart and flesh of all men "cry out" for in some form or other. The deepest cry of humanity is for God as a "living Father." The guidance of a living Father in its perplexities, the sympathy and succour of a living Father in its sorrows and trials—a living Father in whose love it can centre its own anxious heart, and repose its utmost faith. This is its profoundest want; and this the Gospel meets. It does not give some theory or attribute of God, but the living God Himself—One, "whose breath is the life of all," whose thoughts circulate through all intellects, whose sentiments pulsate through all hearts, whose energy is the support of all existence—the force of all forces, the cause of all causes, the life of all life. "The living God."

The passage teaches—

II. THAT THE CHIEF END OF MAN'S EXISTENCE IS TO SERVE THE LIVING GOD. The Gospel not only reveals to man the living God, but reveals man's obligation to Him. It says to him in effect, here is "the living God," and the sum total of your duty is to serve Him. To serve the living God implies two things: First: *That He has a will concerning our*

activities. He has not made us with active powers, and allotted to us no definite sphere of action,—left us to our own impulses. No. He, who has marked out the beds in which oceans are to lie, made a way for the “lightning and the thunder,” defined the orbits through which planets are to roll, has appointed a sphere of action for every creature, and that according to its individual tendencies and powers. To serve the living God implies—Secondly : *A capacity on man’s part to understand and obey the will of God concerning him.* Man has this capacity. The fact that many have obeyed the Divine will, and that many are doing so ; that all are required to do so, and that those who neglect it are oftentimes the victims of self-reproach for their neglect ; conclusively show that man has this power. This power to act in everything with an eye to God, to have His love as the inspiration of our conduct, is that which makes us men, which links us to moral government, and clothes our existence with an unutterable importance.

There are *three facts* in relation to the service of God which we should always bear in mind, and which marks it off from all other service.

First : *That acceptability does not depend either upon the kind, or the amount, or the results, of our activity, but upon its principle.* Men often value the service of their fellows according to the kind of labor which they have performed, or the amount of effort which has been put forth, or the personal advantage realized thereby. Your servant may do your work and promote your interest, and yet feel no sympathy with you. But not so with the service of God. You may do immense labor—labor of the most self-denying kind, labor that may appear Christianly useful to your fellow-men, and yet your service may be entirely unacceptable to God. The principle that prompts is everything in His service. The widow’s mite has more value than the rich man’s wealth : though you give your body to be burned, without love, you are nothing.

Secondly : *That to serve God does not require that we should confine ourselves to any particular department of action.*

Men engaged in the service of others are bound to pursue some specific line of action : they are neither required nor allowed to do all the things they could or would do. It is not so with the service of God, It comprehends every kind of action. It is to serve Him in manual labor, and intellectual studies ; in cultivating the fields, and in ploughing oceans ; in constructing vessels, and building houses ; in ruling and obeying ; in hearing the Gospel, and preaching. It does not mean that one is always to be either on his knees, or singing psalms. Man can do all these things, and all these things must be done. Man's powers and spheres of action are vast and varied. The rule is this, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed:"—in "word," whether you are conducting an argument or narrating a tale—whether you speak in poetry or prose :—in "deed," whether you are pulling down or building up, sowing or reaping, engaged in the devotions of the sanctuary or in the bustle of the market—"Whatsoever ye do, do *all* to the glory of God." The living God should be the spring and object all our activities.

Thirdly : *That to serve God is the only way either to serve ourselves or others.* In the service of others a man is frequently compelled to neglect some portion of his own interest. His master's will is far too narrow to comprehend all the vast interests of his own being. But in the service of God it is not so. So far from a man neglecting his own interest by serving God, *he can only serve himself by serving his Maker.* As planets serve themselves and each other by waiting on the central orb, intelligent creatures can only truly serve themselves and others by waiting on the living God. He that makes the living God the great object of all his activity—who does everything for His sake, oblivious of all excellences but His—of all claims but His,—serves himself and the universe too.

III. THAT MAN'S MORAL NATURE IS GENERALLY IN A STATE WHICH DISQUALIFIES HIM FOR THIS SERVICE.—Hence the necessity which the apostle here states, of the "conscience"

being "purged from dead works" in order to serve the "living God." It is here taught—

First : *That the conscience is polluted.* The word conscience we regard not as designating any particular faculty or sensibility of the soul, but the soul itself—the inner man, the moral self. This conscience, the apostle intimates, is unclean. Under the law of Moses a man was regarded as ceremonially unclean who touched a human grave, or any part of the dead body of a man. During the period of his uncleanness he could not be allowed to mingle in their worship—he was disqualified for any religious service. It is in some measure thus, Paul here intimates, with the conscience. There is a certain defilement of the soul which unfits it for the service of the "living God."

Secondly : *The conscience is polluted through dead works.* Sinful works are called dead, or deadly works, either in allusion to the dead body, whose touch, under the law, would render a person ceremonially unclean, or because they always lead to death. "The wages of sin is death!" What is it that disqualified the moral nature of man to serve its Maker? Not fate—not accident—not any internal or external force over which he had no control—but *sinful* "works;" not the sinful works of another, but the sinful works perpetrated by himself. It was the first sinful work that polluted the first conscience. This has paralysed man's moral faculties and entailed a load of guilt, beneath which it can render no service to God. Every sinful act is a death-blow to the soul—every sinner is a self-destroyer.

Two points of analogy might be observed between the ceremonially unclean man alluded to here by the apostle, and the man who, by his sinful works, is morally disqualified for the service of God. First : *he was not disqualified from other than religious engagements by touching the dead.* He could transact the duties of his shop, plough his field, and attend to the ordinary avocations of life; but he could not appear before God—he could not worship. It is so with the depraved soul. Its intellect can investigate—its imagination can

create, its memory can collect, its social sympathies can play a part in life; but it cannot serve the living God. It is disqualified for this: the principle of supreme sympathy with its Makers, which is the only true spirit of service, is not there—sinful works have destroyed it. Secondly: *The unclean man alluded to might have had a strong temptation to touch a dead body.* Affection, in some cases, would be almost an irresistible temptation. How natural to touch the dear hand of that corpse which ministered to our necessities in infancy and childhood, and pressed us to the warm heart of her whom we called MOTHER!—How natural to press, with the last adieu, those icy but still sweet lips, whose magic kiss often assuaged our childish sorrows, and which in manhood's sterner years we prized as a token of the purest love that flows through human souls. A mother's lips!—ever quivering in love, and pouring sentiments of inspiration into her child; what son is he who would not desire to kiss them though cold in death? But however strong the feeling, the act is forbidden. In vain would it be for the unclean man to say,—It was only my father's cold hand I touched,—it was only my mother's dear lips I kissed. No more is it valid for man to plead the strongest inducement to his sinful works. His sinful works have polluted his conscience, and he is thereby disqualified to serve the living God.

IV. THAT THE GREAT END OF CHRIST'S MEDIATION IS TO REMOVE THIS MORAL DISQUALIFICATION FOR THE SERVICE OF THE LIVING GOD.—“How much more shall the blood of Christ who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God?” The idea is, that as the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of an heifer removed the ceremonial disqualification of the man who, under the law, rendered himself unclean by touching a dead body, so the mediation of Christ would more unquestionably remove the moral disqualification of mankind for the true spiritual service of the “living God.”

How does the mediation of Christ remove this moral disqualification for the service of God?—

First : *By furnishing man with the most complete exhibition of what the service of the living God is.* What is it to serve God? Unless we know what it is we cannot enter upon it. A more full and powerful answer to that question you cannot have than the description which the text gives of the great Mediator. One word designates it—CONSECRATION. *A personal consecration.* “He offered HIMSELF.” Not the consecration of external possessions or internal endowments, but the *entire* self, with all its powers and possessions. Christ devoted His whole being to the service of God.—*A voluntary consecration.* He was offered up contrary to His will—He did not die by a resistless violence. “He had power to lay down his life and power to take it again.”—*A virtuous consecration.* It was a pure life that he devoted. “Without spot.” “He was holy and undefiled and separate from sinners.” “He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” He was embodied virtue; perfect holiness—living and breathing in a corrupt world.—*A consecration Divinely inspired.* “Through the Eternal Spirit.” As there is no life or beauty in the material world that proceed not from “The Eternal Spirit,” neither is there any virtue or excellence in the moral realm that proceeds not from the same source. Every true thought, every pure emotion, every noble purpose, every holy aspiration, and every righteous deed, have their primal springs in that Eternal Spirit that “garnishes the heavens and reviveth the face of the earth.” He maketh intercession in the spirits of the good throughout all worlds. He dwelt in Christ—in all the plenitude of His being. “In Him (Christ) dwelt all the fulness of the God-head bodily.”

Here, then, we have a most clear, comprehensive, perfect, and impressive exhibition as to what the service of God is. What is it to serve God? It is to give up your very being—your body, soul, and spirit to His will; it is to do this freely, virtuously, and by the Spirit of God “who worketh in you to will and to do of His own good pleasure.”

Mediation removes this moral disqualification :—

Secondly : *By supplying the most effective means to generate in the heart the principle of true service.* What is the principle of true service? Supreme love to God. We have shown that whatever be the amount, kind, or apparent utility, of effort, we do in God's name, if this supreme love be absent, the whole is morally invalid and worthless. Though you sacrifice yourself, and give your body to be burned, and have not this love, you have rendered no true or acceptable service. What is wanted, therefore, is this principle. And what can produce it? A deep conviction of two things :—of God's supreme excellence, and of his love for you. Nothing, according to the laws of the human mind, but this, can do it; and this, according to those laws, will inevitably generate this principle of true service. Does not the mediation of Christ supply the means for such a conviction? What a glorious representation of the supreme excellence of God does it supply! and what a resistless proof of His love for sinners does it afford! If mediation is not a force adapted to consume the enmity of the human heart and to kindle the flame of supreme love to God, I have no idea of adaptations. It has done so in unnumbered instances, and it is ever charged with a power to "shed abroad the love of God in the heart by the Holy Ghost."

Mediation removes this moral disqualification :—

Thirdly : *By providing a medium which renders the service approvable to God.*—Unless the living God will graciously approve of the service rendered to Him, it will be of no avail. What he disowns, will be for ever worthless—worthless to ourselves and others. The Bible teaches us that the mediation of Christ gives this Divine approvableness to the services of man; that for "Christ sake" God condescends to listen to our prayers, accepts our praises, and blesses our efforts.

The case stands thus :—Man's moral qualification for the service of the living God consists in three things—a correct idea of the service, the true principle of the service, and a

Divine approval of the service. And those three things are secured by the mediation of Christ. It is very true that its adaptation and necessity for realizing the two first are far more obvious, to our limited understanding, than its adaptation and necessity for securing the last. I can see clearly how mediation was necessary to supply a correct idea of true service, and also to generate in the heart the principle of true service; but I cannot see so clearly its necessity for rendering this service approvable to God. There is no book, that I have seen, on the necessity of mediation in its *atoning* aspect, that does not tend to weaken rather than strengthen my impression of its necessity. The less, I think, men speculate and dogmatise on this aspect of the question, the better for the cause of truth. Sure I am, that the man who has looked the most devoutly and profoundly into the question will be the less disposed to attempt any explanation, and more ready to receive it as an unquestionable though a mysterious doctrine of scripture—saying, “even so Father for so it seemeth good in thy sight.” That Christ’s death had some bearing upon the character and government of God necessary to our salvation cannot be denied by any who receive the Scriptures as a Revelation of God, and apply to them common sense principles of interpretation. We take this fact on God’s own authority, we present it in God’s own language, and doing so, we say of Christ with unshaken faith mingled with amazement—“Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God.”

V. THAT CHRIST’S MEDIATION FOR THIS PURPOSE IS MOST UNQUESTIONABLY EFFICACIOUS. “If the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of an heifer,” &c.—The *a fortiori* argument of the apostle here may, perhaps, be illustrated by three considerations:—

First: *That the object in the one case to be realized is of unspeakably greater importance than the other.* In the one

case, it was the mere ceremonial purifying of "the flesh." In the other case it is the spiritual purifying of the soul; the clearing of the intellect from the mists of error; the cleansing of the conscience from the guilt of sin; the purifying of all the fountains of sympathy from every corrupt feeling. It is making the heart pure that it may see and enjoy the ABSOLUTE GOOD for ever. It were superfluous to suggest, What is the flesh to the spirit? What are the material relations which link us to the earth compared to the mental which bind us to infinitude? What are the ceremonial conveniences of the hour to the moral necessities of untold ages? If the means which infinite wisdom introduced of old to obtain a ceremonial purification of the flesh succeeded, "How much more" shall the means which it has introduced to secure the moral cleansing of the soul succeed?

Secondly: *That the means in one case employed are immeasurably more costly than in the other.* What are the "blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of an heifer," to the "blood of Christ" who offered Himself without spot to God? Had not the apostle suggested the comparison, one might have revolted at the idea as profane. "The blood of Christ!" It was that which coursed through the arm of Him that built this wondrous Universe. "Precious blood!" What are the cattle upon a thousand hills—what are all spiritual principalities and powers—what is the entire Creation itself to His blood? Globes, galaxies, systems, hierarchies—all things finite in Infinite space are less than an atom in the balance against one drop of this blood. Shall means so comparatively valueless succeed in realizing ends of confessedly little moment, and means of such infinite value fail to accomplish ends of such transcendent worth? No. "How much more," &c.

Thirdly: *That the agent employed in the one case to apply the means is infinitely greater than in the other.* There seems to be a suppressed comparison in the text between the frail men that applied "the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of an heifer" to the ceremonially unclean individual, and "the

Eternal Spirit," by whom the other means are employed. If the comparatively unimportant end was realized by apparently insignificant means when applied by the hands of a frail man, How much more shall the transcendently glorious end be accomplished by infinitely precious means when applied by the Eternal Spirit? "How much more?" O for an intellect to sound the depths of this argument and bring out its mighty powers! "How much more?" How much more is the rolling Atlantic than the glistening dew-drop? How much more are the central fires that light up the universe than the beam that falls upon the eye-ball of an insect?

The meaning of the whole is, that as to the efficacy of Christ's mediation to qualify men to serve the living God again, there can be no question. The adaptation of means to ends show it; the frequent and unequivocal declarations of the Bible show it; and the millions who are now in heaven, and the thousands now on earth who are serving the living God, show it. "His blood cleanseth from all sin." "He is able to save to the uttermost."

From the foregoing remarks, learn:—

First: *The infallible test of a sound Gospel theology.* What is it? An accurate and comprehensive knowledge of orthodox Divinity? I disparage not this. So evident must it be to the most sciolistic in thought, that a true Christian creed is essential to a true Christian life, that he must have a very humble estimation of his readers or auditors who would attempt any formal or lengthened enforcement of the point. It is one of the most patent facts in human experience. But this is not a correct test of sound Gospel theology. What then? Great zeal for orthodox opinions? I have seldom seen any virtue, but often much of the opposite quality, in this. Zeal for our own deep self-formed religious convictions is natural, and if the convictions are in conformity with truth, right. But zeal for adopted religious opinions is inherently worthless and socially injurious. The most heterodox men, in the true Gospel sense, are the men who are the most ready to boast of their orthodoxy, and fight with a pietistic horror and a savage

hate against all heresies. The heresy-hunting spirit is the spirit of arrogance, officiousness, and intolerance, not the Spirit of Christ. What then is thy infallible test?—*Serving the living God.* He who serves the living God, as I have described that service, as truly proves the soundness of his Gospel views, as the man of sound health and strong limb proves thereby the wholesomeness of his food. Prove thy orthodoxy, my brother, not by thy little logic but by thy daily life. “Show us thy faith by thy works.” Write thy creed in thy conduct.

From the subject, learn :—

Secondly : *The true function of a Preacher.* What has the preacher to do with the Gospel? How is he to use it? The great aim of some preachers seem to be, to bend the teachings of the Gospel to some human standard—to run the whole into the mould of some metaphysical Aristotle or rigorous Calvin. The aim of others seems to be to use it so as to exhibit their little powers of wit and logic, and oratory, as to attract the empty crowd and enjoy the popularity of the hour. Others use it in order to throw suspicion upon the faith, and to degrade in popular esteem all who are not of their little sect. Alas! how the blessed Gospel has been, and is, perverted by its professed expounders and advocates? Brothers, How should we use it? *To qualify and induce men to serve the living God.* How does the physician in the chamber of sickness use his medical science?—to controvert other theories, or to parade his own merits? No, but to raise the suffering patient from his bed, restore him to vigor of health, and to the duties and pleasures of life.

From this subject learn :—

Thirdly : *The inexcusableness of the sinner.* Reason, experience, conscience, and the Bible tell thee that there is no happiness but in His service. Every throb of pleasure in the universe of happy spirits springs from efforts in the service of God. It is the only paradise of soul. All beyond its sphere is hell. Why not enter this service?

Thou need'st not pause for the lack of the necessary qualification. Christ will furnish thee with this if thou wilt apply. There is a glorious sphere of labor—healthy, joyous, ever-promising and remunerative labor marked out for thee by thy Creator. Why not enter? MEDIATION furnishes abundant means to qualify thee to work therein, under the ever-brightening smiles of God. “If the blood of bulls and of goats,” &c.

The Genius of the Gospel.

ABLE expositions of the Gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its *widest* truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archaeological, geographic, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

THIRTY-SECOND SECTION.—*Matt. xi. 20—24.*

SUBJECT:—*Mighty Works; or, Diversity in the External Spiritual Advantages of Mankind.*

FROM this terribly significant utterance of Christ the following truths are fairly deducible:—

I. THAT GOD VOUCHSAFES A GREATER MANIFESTATION OF HIMSELF TO SOME MEN THAN TO OTHERS. The men of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum were made the spectators of mightier Divine works than ever came within the observation of the men of Tyre, Sidon, or Sodom. The “mightier works,” of course, we suppose to mean, not the works of nature, but the works of *Redemptive Providence*. Indeed, the mighty works of God in nature are more or less

the same in every age and land. "The invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead." But in His Redemptive Providence His works have varied greatly in different times and scenes. (1) "Mighty works" were wrought to redeem man in the days of the Patriarchs—works of judgment and of mercy. The expulsion from Eden, the dawn of mercy in the first promise, the translation of Enoch, the deluge, the call of Abraham, and all the Divine visions and discoveries made to him and his successors. (2) "Mighty works" were wrought to redeem men in the *Jewish* age:—emancipation from Egypt, the miracles in the wilderness, the victories in the promised land, the organizing of a magnificent system of worship—which stood for ages as the glory of the world—the works of holy priests and inspired prophets, and devoted saints, were "mighty works" of God. (3) "Mighty works" were wrought to redeem men during the personal history of Christ. The works that Jesus performed in His own person, the works to which He now refers, were "mighty works;" so numerous that if they had been written in a book the world itself would not contain the volumes. (4) "Mighty works" were wrought to redeem men in the Christian age:—The wonders of Pentecost, the glorious triumphs which attended the preaching of the Gospel in the first three centuries, and all the moral revolutions accomplished by it in different parts of the earth to this hour, are the "mighty works of God." God has not ceased to perform His "mighty works" before the children of men. Every false system demolished, every error explored, every truth enthroned, every soul converted, is the "mighty work" of God.

These *four* classes of "mighty works" vary much in their character. The first, we think, would not be so great as the second, nor the second as the third; and we, the men who witness the fourth, have the advantage of all. Through this Divine word we witness the *whole* that is past in connection with all that is now going on.

II. THAT THE DESIGN OF ALL THESE MIGHTY WORKS IS MAN'S SPIRITUAL REFORMATION. "If the mighty works which were done in you (Chorazin, Bethsaida), had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have *repented* long ago." This language implies not merely that Tyre and Sidon in common with all people needed *repentance*, but that the grand object of God's mighty works, through all ages and in all places, is to effect a moral reformation. Ever since the fall, the designs of God in his dealings with mankind, have been this. The turning of their thoughts, emotions, and activeness into the channel of truth, rectitude, and blessedness has been His end. "All these things worketh God oftentimes with man to bring him back from the pit to enlighten him with the light of the living."

III. THAT THE MIGHTY WORKS WHICH WOULD PROVE EFFECTIVE TO REFORM SOME, HAVE NO SAVING EFFECT UPON OTHERS. Jesus distinctly avers that the works which he had wrought in Chorazin and Bethsaida, and to no useful effect, would have worked out the spiritual reformation of Tyre and Sidon. This is not the language of exaggeration—not the language of one who judges from probabilities, but the language of one who knew with absolute certainty that of which He spoke. He was set up from everlasting—His delight was always with the sons of men. He knew those men of Tyre and Sidon, who lived many ages back, He felt that the works which he was performing now about the shores of Galilee would, if they had been wrought before the men of Tyre and Sidon, have effected their conversion.

This fact, which we are bound to receive on the authority of Christ, is profoundly significant. What does it show? Does it not show (1) the diversity in souls? Though all souls are similar in their general attributes, relations, and responsibilities, they are nevertheless so different, either in some particular feature of their nature or in the degree of depravity, or both,—that means which would be effectual in the reformation of some, are impotent upon others. Does it not

show (2) the moral freedom even of depraved souls? So free has the Almighty left the action of the human spirit, even in its fallen state—that even His “mighty works” cannot effect their moral design without its consent. It may be popular, because gratifying to the native indolence of the corrupt nature, to preach that the sinner is powerless; but the fact that he can, that he does resist the moral influence put forth in the “mighty works” of God for his repentance, impress me with the wonderful energy of his freedom to act. Does it not show (3) the sovereignty of God in His dealings with men? If the men of Tyre and Sidon would have been converted had they witnessed the mighty works which came under the notice of the men of Chorazin and Bethsaida, why did He not furnish them with such displays of His power?—Why were not the shores of the Mediterranean made the theatre of Divine actions as mighty, as were the shores of Galilee? I have no answer to the question but this—“Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good.” Does it not show (4) that we must not depend too much upon “mighty works” to convert? Some men in our age have pronounced the moral system of Christianity a failure, and are looking forward, as their only hope of the world, to a miraculous dispensation, a dispensation of “mighty works,” to do that which the preaching of the Gospel has failed to accomplish. We say to those men, if “mighty works” can necessarily convert why were not the men of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum saved?

IV. THAT THE GUILT OF THE UNCONVERTED IS MEASURED BY THE DIVINE WORKS THAT HAVE BEEN WROUGHT AMONGST THEM. The guilt of Tyre and Sidon, and Sodom, was great. And if we may judge from the physical doom they met, we may well stand appalled at the enormity of their guilt. Where are Tyre and Sidon now? In the days of David and Solomon they were a prosperous people—their “merchants were princes;” they furnished materials and workmen for the Temple of the Lord. Where is Tyre now? Read the doom

which justice pronounced upon it through the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel. Read the record of travellers and see how it has been realized—not a vestage of its former glory remains : only a few fishermen live amongst its ruins now. The waves of the ocean dash on the lonely rocks, from which, long ago, towered those magnificent palaces of Sidon, in which its prosperous people moved in pomp and revelled in pleasure. Where is Sodom, which was once as the “garden of the Lord?” The judgment of Heaven consumed it with its fires. But the physical doom of these people, terrible though it was, is only a faint type of their far more tremendous spiritual destiny.

But the language of Jesus implies that the guilt of Chorazin and Bethsaida, and Capernaum was greater still. “Woe unto thee,” &c. What words are these ! they are the expressions of a mind that fully gauged the dimensions of their guilt, and fully comprehended the miseries that awaited them. “Woe.” What meaning is in this “Woe !” Does it express indignation or pity ? Does it mean that He would have them damned, or that He was in the anguish of unutterable commiseration at their coming doom ? It is, methinks, the profound articulated sigh of compassion at the oceans of misery and the ages of torment which rolled before His all-seeing eye, and which awaited the men He addressed.

V. THAT THE RELATIVE DEGREE OF GUILT BELONGING TO SINNERS WILL FULLY APPEAR ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT. “It will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon,” &c. It is implied here—First : *That there is a day of judgment appointed.* Secondly : *That on this day men of remotest times and lands will meet.* On this day Tyre and Sidon, and Sodom, Chorazin and Bethsaida, and Capernaum shall appear before the judge. These men are living. The judgment that destroyed Tyre and Sidon did not destroy the souls of the population. The fires that consumed Sodom left the souls of the people untouched : all the men that ever have been are still living, and will stand in their “lot at

the end of days." "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ," &c. Thirdly: *That the mighty concourse of men that will meet on that day will be treated according to the measure of their respective guilt.*

Let us realize our advantages and act worthy of them in Time. Were Christ to address us here in this country and age, He might say, "If the mighty works"—the works of tract distribution, Bible circulation, religious education, Gospel preaching, were done in heathen lands that are now being performed in Britain, those heathens would have repented long ago.

THIRTY-THIRD SECTION.—Matt. xi. 25—27.

SUBJECT:—*The Wise, the Prudent, and the Babes; or, the Hidden and Revealed.*

If we regard, as I think we are justified in doing, this utterance of Jesus as immediately following His pronouncement of "Woe" over Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, we shall be at no loss to determine what is meant here by "these things" which he gives us to understand are "hid from the wise and the prudent, and revealed unto babes." These things were what the "mighty works" expressed and embodied. The works of a being are the fullest, strongest and most unmistakeable representations of his spirit, principles and purposes. They are living words—words uttered not by one member, the tongue, but by the whole being. God does not reveal Himself to us by mere verbal utterances. His words are generally the revelations of His works, and His works are the revelation of Himself. His "mighty works" of Redemptive Providence are intended and suited to reveal to the soul His moral character, His love for man, and His purpose to save him. And these are "the things" of which our Saviour here speaks: and "these things," which are the *meaning* of the "mighty works," are the soul-transforming powers.

Jesus teaches us to look upon "these things," *i. e.* the spirit and substance of the Gospel in two aspects,—as hidden from some, and as revealed to others.

I. AS HIDDEN FROM SOME. They were "hid from the wise and the prudent." There were some of our Saviour's hearers, it is to be feared by far the majority, who, although they had the Gospel brought under their notice by Himself, by works and words, did not *see* it. Like those whom some of the old prophets addressed, whose spiritual senses were closed against the message ; like "the natural man" of whom the apostle speaks, who cannot "discern" spiritual things. Thousands there are of such in this age who are in attendance upon the ministry of the Word. What does this concealment arise from ? In answer to this question, the circumstances of the people of whom Jesus now speaks as having these spiritual things hid from them, enable us to say—

First : *That they were hidden not from the want of an external manifestation.* Spiritual truth had been presented to them in all the forms in which it could appear. Not merely in living words and wonderful works, but in the example of Him who was truth itself. And yet they did not discern the things thus represented. They were like blind men under the bright heavens, and deaf men amidst flowing tides of music. That these things are hidden from heathens is no wonder, for they have never had the external revelation of them ;—they cannot see these things because there is no light thrown upon them from the heavens. But that they should be hidden from those who live amongst the utterances and forms of revelation, is passing strange and solemn.

We infer from the circumstances of these people—

Secondly : *That they were not hidden for the want of intellectual ability to discern them.* It was "from the wise and the prudent," not from idiots or dolts that they were concealed. Had the men to whom Jesus refers been destitute of *natural capacity*, men of no intellect, we could not have wondered. Though the sun shine in the sky, if the man has not the organ

of vision, nature will be hid from him. Intellect is the eye of the soul, and though the sun of external revelation throws its radiance about him, if he has not the intellectual eye, the whole field of truth will be hid in densest obscurity. But the persons to whom Christ alludes possessed in an eminent degree this intellectual vision. They were "the wise and the prudent;"—men, some of whom had distinguished themselves in culture and learning, and were not, perhaps, a little proud of their supposed superiority in genius and attainments. They had the power of understanding these things intellectually,—of throwing them into a system of theology; and, probably, some of them did so, and yet spiritually, they were "hid from them."

We infer from the circumstances of these people—

Thirdly : *That they were not hidden by any influence exerted by God for the purpose.* It is true that the words as they stand would give the superficial reader this impression. The words are, "thou hast hidden them from the wise and prudent." Were we to assume that this rendering is most faithful to the original, we should still reject the interpretation which gives the idea that Jesus here teaches, that the Great Father exerted any influence to conceal these things from the wise and prudent. Three considerations are sufficient to show that such an idea is not to the slightest extent admissible. (1) *That the Bible recognizes a sense in which God may be regarded as the author of things that are even contrary to His will and influence.** "Is there evil in a city and the Lord hath not done it?" In the same sense we may ask, is there evil in any part of the universe and the Lord has not done it? He not only permits it, but He imparts the energy which commits it. Even the Prince of Evil derives his existence and energy every moment from Him. On this principle He is said to have hardened Pharaoh's heart;" to have put a "lying spirit" in the mouth of certain prophets; and to have commissioned Isaiah to make the

* Exodus vii. 3, 4. 2 Sam. xii. 11, 12, 24. 1 Kings, xxii. 22, 23.
Isaiah vi. 10.

hearts of those who would resist His ministry “fat,” and “their ears heavy,” and to shut their eyes “lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and be converted and healed.” The idea merely is, go and proclaim my truth which shall have this blinding and hardening effect upon their gross and perverse *natures*. But it is, after all, only in a very accommodative sense that God can be said to be the Author of that which is against His holy nature, against His revealed Will, against the whole of His creative and providential system of action. MORALLY and truly a being is only the author of that which he produces by *purpose* and *agency*. (2) *That to conceal spiritual things from the sinner’s soul does not require the agency of God.* They are hid. His agency is required not to conceal but to reveal. Infinite wisdom works not superfluously. (3) *That as a fact, the Divine agency amongst those to whom Jesus refers was to reveal.* Through the life, doctrines and miracles of His son, He brought those spiritual things most palpably and impressively under the notice of these men of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. We cannot, therefore, for a moment entertain the idea that there was either on God’s part a positive influence exerted to blind the minds of these Jews, or the withholding of any influence required to enlighten them unto salvation. Such a supposition robs the history of Jesus of its benevolent meaning, and stains with hideous blot the lovely character of God.

Jesus here teaches us to look upon these things—

II. AS REVEALED TO OTHERS. They were “revealed unto babes.” The passage gives certain particulars in reference to this spiritual revelation which will, as we examine it, throw much light upon the whole of this important subject.

First: *That the revelation of “these things” is something besides both the external manifestation, and the intellectual ability.* We have seen that the men to whom the Saviour refers had both. They had the external manifestations: The Prophets—John the Baptist; and now Christ had

brought "these things" most powerfully under their attention. They had, too, sufficient intellectual power to understand "these things"—they were the wise and the prudent; and yet with all this outward light, and with all their intellectual power of vision, they saw not "these things." They were like men standing in the midst of a magnificent landscape, with a bright sun shining about them, and with eyes too, and yet all the beauties of the scene concealed from them. A man may be well acquainted with the Bible, he may attend a ministry which brings out in the strongest light the great doctrines of the Gospel,—and he, too, may have intellectual power to view them in their right, philosophical, and logical relations, and yet not *see* the things. A man may be a theologian and yet have the *things* of the Gospel hid from him.

Secondly: *That the revelation of "these things" depends upon the state of the heart.* It is "to babes" that they are revealed. Not babes in years, not babes in mental feebleness, not babes in knowledge; but babes in heart-attributes, guileless, humble, docile, loving, impressible, truthful.

Man may be said to have three distinct powers of vision: the *sensational*, by which impressions of the *form* of things are conveyed to the consciousness; *intellectual*, by which impressions of the *idea* of things are conveyed to the consciousness; and the *spiritual*, by which impressions of the moral and divine *spirit* of things are conveyed to the consciousness. It is only as man sees, in the last sense, that he truly sees "these things"—sees as a man. Every part of the universe has a *spiritual significance*; but this can only be seen by the spiritual faculty. Neither the mere sensuous man nor the mere intellectual man can discern, either in nature or history or the Bible, "the things of the Spirit"—they are spiritually discerned. All men with physical eyes see the wide-spread earth, and all men with minds can understand something about the science of nature, but only those with a certain spiritual sensibility can see and feel the overpowering loveliness and spiritual significance of the landscape. The musician may fill the air with strains of melting melody, but it is only

those with a certain spiritual sensibility can *feel* the music ; to others, even if they understood the theory of music, it is mere sound. Nature to the physical eye is but *form*, to the intellectual eye it is but *doctrine*, to the spiritual eye it is a divine *spirit*. Or, to use another illustration—To understand and feel the theory of a man's life, you must have something of the spirit of that man in you. Unless you have something of ambition you will never understand the life of Napoleon. Unless you have some benevolence in you, Howard's life will be an enigma. If you have not some love for truth, the history of the Martyrs will be shrouded in mystery from you. For this reason, true Christians in every age have had to say, "The world knoweth us not." "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." Here is the philosophy of spiritual blindness. Our native sympathy with the right, the good, and the Divine, must be awakened if we would know the things that are of God.

Thirdly : *The revelation of these things calls for the profoundest gratitude to God.* "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes." The profound thankfulness here expressed is not *that they were hid* from "the wise and prudent," but that, while they were hid from them, they were revealed unto babes. A similar form of expression to this you have in Romans vi. 17. "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you." We are not to understand, of course, that Paul thanked God that they were the servants of sin, but that they having been the servants of sin, were now "obeying from the heart," &c. In like manner does Christ thank the Almighty Father, not for hiding "these things from the wise and prudent ;" but that though hidden from them, they were revealed unto babes : that whilst men of culture and refinement, sages and statesmen, bards and orators, spiritually, understood not "these things"—the simple-hearted and child-like—like the fishermen of Galilee, did.

But why this profound gratitude for the revelation of "these things?" (1) *Because of the immense good involved in the revelation of these things to man.* When "these things" are revealed to a man it is the imparting to him a new existence—a new universe. Vast is the difference between the brute and the man—they live in different worlds: vast is the difference too, between man in a savage state, and man endowed with the genius and blessed with the attainments of a Milton; but far greater is the difference between the most elevated mind, from whom these spiritual things are hid, and the humblest to whom they are revealed. There is a gulph between them: the one is in "the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity," and the other is "sitting down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (2) *Because of the wonderful condescension on God's part in the revelation of these things to men.* "Lord of Heaven and Earth!"—The universal Proprietor and Sovereign. He who was before all—is in all, and over all—condescended to reveal these spiritual things to the hearts of poor sinful men. This is God's work. Paul felt this—"It pleased God to reveal His Son in me." He must therefore have the praise.

Fourthly: *The revelation of these things is made to the soul through Jesus Christ.* "All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." There are four thoughts here in relation to Christ as the revealer of these things to the soul. (1) *That He is a Divinely authorised revealer.* "All things are delivered unto me of my Father." All spiritual things: all spiritual truth and influence—for His Redemptive Mission are the things, probably, meant. As Mediator, He is thus Divinely qualified for this work. (2) *That He is a transcendently glorious revealer.* "No man knoweth the Son but the Father." He is so mysteriously great in His nature, relations, offices, and aims, that there is but One Being in the universe that *fully* understands Him, and that is God. He is the WONDERFUL to all finite intellect,

in all worlds. (3) *That He is an absolutely perfect revealer.* "Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son." *He knows* the Father and He only. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son of the Father, He only hath declared Him." The old fathers and prophets knew a little of God: angels know a little of God. No finite being, after the study of milleniums, will ever know Him fully. Christ knows the Father, He knows Him perfectly—He alone comprehends the Infinite. (4) *That He is the indispensable revealer.* "No man can know the Father, but he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." Christ is the Logos. The sinner will be for ever ignorant of God unless He reveals Him. It is He alone that "opens the Book" of the Divine character and history to the universe, and page after page expounds it.

THIRTY-FOURTH SECTION.—*Matt. xi. 28—30.*

SUBJECT :—*Invitation to the Heavy Laden; or, the Spirit of Christianity.*

IN the three preceding verses which we have already noticed, Christ appears in His relation to the Great God. He stands before us there, as *the devout worshipper,—exclusive comprehender, authorized and indispensable* revealer, of the everlasting Father. Here He appears in His relation to humanity. As the divine philanthropist, He looks with an eye of unutterable tenderness and love upon an afflicted and sin-burdened world, and earnestly invites every distressed soul to come to Him for rest.

The language of the text is figurative, and the imagery is borrowed from the agriculture of the time and place. The Jews were accustomed to cultivate the land with oxen, which were yoked together for the purpose. Perhaps Jesus now beheld this operation going on in a neighbouring field: He saw the oxen, with heavy yokes, drawing the heavy imple-

ments, tired and well-nigh exhausted, and still obliged to work. This, to Him, was a picture of the sinners of His age—they were under a heavy yoke of iniquity, wearied and almost exhausted, but still pursuing their wretched course. His benevolent heart overflows with sympathy, and He invites them to Him for rest. The depth and glow—the universality and tenderness of the love expressed in this utterance are enough to induce a fear, in a thoughtful expositor, lest he should not do justice to this love—lest his coldness should conceal its ardor; his selfishness, its freeness; his narrowness, its universality; his hardness, its exquisite pathos. It requires benevolence to preach benevolence; tenderness to preach tenderness; pathos to preach pathos; the spirit of Christ to preach Christ.

The words teach us three truths in relation to Christianity:—First, that Christianity implies moral distress; secondly, that it propounds moral relief; and thirdly, that it demands moral effort.

I. CHRISTIANITY IMPLIES MORAL DISTRESS. It addresses itself to those who “labor and are heavy laden.” In order to understand clearly the class to whom Christ appeals, we may glance at the various classes of moral intelligences. They are divided into three:—

First: *Those who have no burden.* These are angels and sainted men. They pursue the path of destiny with blithe and ever-strengthening soul. “They mount up as on the wings of eagles; they run and are not weary, they walk and do not faint.” Christianity is not addressed to these. Angels never required it: the original religion of the universe has ever been theirs, and that religion does not imply moral distress. Sainted men once required it but it has done its redeeming work with them—they have passed into a higher world, and are placed under another and a sublimer dispensation.

Secondly: *Those who have heavy burdens, but which are not removable.* The Bible gives us to believe that there are

spirits in some dark and accursed part of this universe who are sinking everlastingly beneath a load of guilt, and for whom there is no hope. How appalling the aspect, how crushing the weight, how galling the pressure of that mountain of guilt, which rests upon the spirits of the lost ! Wretched spirits ! they labor and are heavy laden, and no invitation of mercy is addressed to them—no hope of relief is held out to them !

Thirdly : *Those who have heavy burdens, but which can be removed.* These are sinners on earth. There are heavy burdens resting upon men here. None but God can tell the amount of trial that is surging through human souls every moment. Some are suffering under one burden and some under another. There are millions on this lovely earth to night to whom life itself is a burden—a heavy crushing burden. There are *physical* burdens—infirmities and diseases of the body ; there are *social* burdens—the care of the family, the claims of business, the inconstancy of friends, the hollowness and selfishness of the world ; there are *political* burdens—the enactments of injustice and the tyranny of despotism are heavy burdens upon the hearts of nations ; there are *religious* burdens—the unmeaning routine, the painful pilgrimages, the costly sacrifice, imposed by a wily and wicked priesthood, are burdens on the spirits of millions. Such burdens as these often make life intolerable, and induce men to exclaim with Job—“I loathe life, I would not live always.” But all these burdens may be felt, and often are where there is no *deep sense of sin*. The victims are weary of these burdens, not because of the sin which is the cause of them, but because of the inconvenience and pain which they produce.

But that which gives pressure and galling force to all these burdens is *a sense of sin*. There are men under these fair heavens, on this earth, where the Saviour of the world lived and labored, suffered and died, and where His blessed Gospel is faithfully preached, who feel that sin is the burden of all their burdens. They are sick of pleasure, they are tired

of their life. They are found at the altar of Paganism, in the mosque of the Mahomedan, as well as in different parts of Christendom, crying out in different languages, but with the same emphasis of soul—"Wherewithal shall we come before the Lord, and how shall we bow ourselves before the most High God?"

This is the class which Christianity addresses—which Christ here invites. Blessed be God for providing a remedy in Christianity for this class! O ye distressed souls, tried by the world, tempted by Satan, smitten by conscience, ashamed of the past, afraid of the future—whose heavens are cloudy and seem charged with storms, listen to the invitation of Christ and accept it. "Come unto me all ye," &c.

II. CHRISTIANITY PROVIDES MORAL RELIEF. "Ye shall find rest unto your souls." Rest for the soul. It does not promise that those who come to Christ shall be at once released from all *corporeal* burdens incident to our mortal life. The laws of the material universe are regardless of moral distinctions. The good and evil, the just and the unjust, material nature treats alike.

But what is the rest for the soul? Is it a deadening of the sensibilities so as to prevent us from feeling acutely the evils of life? No. Christianity instead of deadening our sensibilities, quickens them. Nor is it the rest of inactivity. The rest of the soul is not the rest of inaction, it means neither insensitiveness nor inactivity. What is it then?

First: *It is rest from all self-seeking.* All men are working; labor is a Divine institution; the world is full of action. Man's curse is not that he labors—labor itself is a blessing, but that he labors from the unhappy impulses of selfishness. Every man is seeking his own—each individual makes himself an end. This is the source of distress. Because of this, the individual worker is full of a thousand anxieties, and because of this, society is ever in commotion. There are as many conflicting interests as there are men. The man who comes to Christ, whilst he

does not cease from work, ceases "from his own work." He works from love to God and His universe—his meat and his drink are to do the Will of his Father. Whether at his desk, behind the counter, in the field, at the hustings, in the exchange, at the festive circle, or in the temple, the same generous and unselfish motives govern him. He rejoices in the increase of wealth, and power, and influence, not on his own account, but because they will enable him to do more for the common good, and the glory of God. *True benevolent labor is rest to the soul.* Every act is in harmony with the constitution of the mind, with the laws of the universe—with the Will of God. Every such act is a note which swells the music of life and heightens the harmonics of creation. Whether worldly adversity or prosperity attend the labors of such a man, he says "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord!"

Secondly : *Rest from all secular anxieties.* How much distress is in our world from this source ! Our own countrymen especially are heavy laden with worldly cares. These cares bend the strongest frame and disfigure the most lovely countenance,—these worldly cares are lying as a mighty incubus upon the population of our country. Jesus will give rest from these anxieties to all who come unto Him. He does it by pledging His disciples every needful blessing : "Seek ye first the kingdom of God," &c. He does it by inculcating upon them to "Take no anxious thought for the morrow;" "To be careful for nothing," &c. He does it by assuring them of a parental Providence that adorns the lilies of the valley and feeds the birds of Heaven. He does it by giving them the consciousness that this world is, in their case, preparatory to a better, and that "all things work together for their good." "Thus they glory in tribulation;" they know that Jesus is their guide—that the Eternal is their Father; that the universe is their home, and that everlasting life is their heritage.

Thirdly : *Rest from religious sacrifices.* By religious sacrifices I mean, whatever a man does in connection with

religion, not cheerfully and happily. How much of this kind of work is done in connection with religion! Most men are anxious to realize some paradise beyond the grave. They work for this, and they feel it a burden. The Pagan will present costly offerings for this—the Mahomedan performs painful pilgrimages for this—the Catholic attends to painful penances for this—the Protestant gives his money for this. Whatever a man does in religion for the sake of an ulterior good, and not for its own sake, is a sacrifice, and is a burden. The world is groaning under this. Religious duties are burdens. The religion of Jesus frees us from them. A true loving disciple blots the word sacrifice from his practical creed. What he gives is a gratification to him. I protest against the argument that is sometimes used to induce men to give to the cause of Christ. We must make sacrifices, it is said. This idea is crippling our religious institutions. The Church is “heavy laden” because of these sacrifices; because of this she moves as a wearied traveller with stiff limb and slow step. In every Church there is the complaint of too many collections. Why is this? not because the demand is really too great—but because the spirit of religion is gone. You must translate the idea of sacrifice into that of thanksgiving, and religious burdens will be removed. Then the Church will move more cheerfully—she will take the wings of an angel, sweep the hemispheres of the globe, and preach the everlasting Gospel to all nations and kindreds of people.

Fourthly : *Rest from all legal obedience.* There are two kinds of obedience to law—the literal and the spiritual. The former depends upon specific directions; it is doing just as much as is in the letter, and *because* it is in the letter. This obedience is merely outward and mechanical; it is in the knee, tongue, or head, but not in the heart. It is always a burden. This was the observance of the Jews. The other is spiritual. Supreme love to the Lawgiver is the motive and inspiration. This is happiness. There are two sons, children of the same father, living under the same roof, sub-

ject to the same domestic laws ; one has lost all filial love, his father has no longer any hold upon his affections. The other is full of the sentiment, the filial instinct in him is almost passion. How different is the obedience of these two sons ! The one does nothing but what is found in the command, and does that merely as a matter of form ; he would not do it if he could help it. The other does it not because it is in the command, but because it is the wish of him he loves. He goes beyond the written law, he anticipates his father's will. Obedience is burden in the one case, but, delight in the other. Much of the work now being done in the Christian Church is like the obedience of the unloving son. It is done because it is commanded ; done grudgingly, and unhappily. Christ removes this : He breathes that spirit of love that makes obedience blessedness.

Fifthly : *Rest from all forebodings of conscience.* A guilty conscience is the burden of burdens. It makes the soul gloomy and tempestuous. It makes death terrible, the grave a land of darkness, eternity an intolerable idea. Christianity removes this. "Therefore being justified by faith," &c.

III. CHRISTIANITY REQUIRES MORAL EFFORT. "Come unto me," &c. If the burden is to be removed *something must be done.* And what ? Three things :—

First : *A spiritual approximation to Christ.* "Come unto me." It would be trite to say this is not to be regarded in a material but in a spiritual sense. As spiritual beings we have capacities to visit scenes and persons separated from us by countless leagues :—mind defies both time and space. On the wings of thought it can cross centuries in a moment, and visit scenes which no human eye hath seen. We are often doing so. Eden, Sinai, Jerusalem, Calvary—how often in our religious exercises do we visit these ? Abraham, Moses, David, Paul, Luther—we often feel ourselves standing side by side with these. We can come even now "to an innumerable company of angels," &c. Thus we are to come to Christ. Through His biography we come to His sentiments, to

His sufferings, to His death, to His principles, to His heart, to Himself.

Secondly : *A spiritual learning of Christ.* Of all things nothing is so important to man as learning. Without some learning he is little better than a brute. Of all learning there is none so important as religious learning. It alone touches the soul. Of religious learning there is none to be compared with that taught by Christ. He is the Logos. "Never man spake like this man," &c.

Thirdly : *Spiritual obedience to Christ.* "Take my yoke," &c. Every man has a moral master. He is under some yoke. The governing passion is your moral master. *Sensuality, worldliness, fame, and superstition.* These are yokes, heavy yokes, too. Christ's yoke is easy ; it does not exhaust your strength, it gives new energy. It does not gall, it inspires with happiness. Come to Christ. *Mourner, doubter, backslider, penitent,*—come to Christ.

Germs of Thought.

SUBJECT :—*The Moral Characteristic ; or, the one Determining Element of Character.*

"One thing thou lackest."—Mark x. 21.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Forty-seventh.

THERE is a gradation in depravity as well as in excellence. Sin has its blade, its ear, and its full corn in the ear. Great injustice has been done to the cause of truth and humanity, by an indiscriminate denunciation of man. Those who are not far from the kingdom of God, almost Christians, receive the same treatment as those who are "earthly, sensual, and devilish," "twice dead," "without God and without hope in the world."

If there be such a difference in depravity, it is natural and important to ask : How small may a man's depravity be,

and how much his goodness, and yet he not be virtuous in the sight of God? In other words :—What is the determining element of character—that which divides into distinct classes, and assigns to distinct dooms, the least depraved and the least good? What is the boundary line which throws into an impassable distance the kingdom of Satan from the kingdom of Christ? As between the life of an animal and the life of a plant there is much correspondence, though there may be some point or points which divide them; and as between the life of a brute and the life of a rational being, there is much agreement, though at the same time a something which marks them off from each other; so whatever agreement there may be between the most virtuous sinner and the most imperfect saint, there is still a something which divides;—a moral *differentia*. What is it? What is that which turns the balance, that which makes a bad man good, and gives to natural virtues moral and divine worth? This momentous question we shall answer in the light of this narrative. And we observe, negatively :—

First : *Not respect for moral goodness.* This young man, of accomplishments and fortune, paid a profound respect to the moral character of Christ. (x. 14.) He “kneeled to Him.” What did he reverence in Christ? There was no mark of worldly grandeur about Him. He was poor and despised. He saw moral goodness beaming in His looks and radiating forth all the acts of His life. Respect for excellence is an amiable feature of character, especially when that goodness is found in connection with nothing that the world considers great. It is common to see, magnify, and laud a very little virtue in a man of great worldly eminence. His little virtue will make him a great saint and hero. Sycophants will talk of it, and the Press will trumpet it half the world over. It is, however, a rare natural virtue to observe and respect goodness in poverty, as this young man did now. But this is not the “One thing.” What then?

Secondly : *Not correct theological knowledge.* In this young man’s address to Christ he indicates a clear know-

ledge of three facts, which involve much correct theological information. (1.) *The existence of future blessedness.* He knew more than Socrates. He not only knew of a future state, but of a future state of blessedness—"eternal life." (2.) *The necessity of good works to obtain it.* "What good thing shall I do?" He knew that he could never get it by adopting a certain creed, or cherishing certain sentimental feelings; but that something good *must be done, and done by himself.* Unless our faith and feelings are wrought into acts and habits they are worth nothing. (3.) *The capability of Christ to direct him in the right course.* "Good master," &c. Now all this is a good portion of a good creed. But there was "One thing" wanted yet. What?

Thirdly: *Not a strong desire for future blessedness.* Neither his station in life nor his wealth satisfied him: he felt the world unsatisfying. *He desired Heaven.* This is common. Heavenly desires are but the breathings of earthly selfishness. This young man desired "eternal life." But "One thing" was wanted yet. What?

Fourthly: *Not a spirit of genuine docility.* He knew much, but he sought for more information, and sought it from Christ. This is good. Many men who call themselves Christians lose their docility. They know all, and become dogmatists, not learners. It is mentally healthy, it is virtuous to keep the enquiring faculty always alive, thirsting and actively crying for more, and yet again for more.

Fifthly: *Not a faultless external morality.* "All these have I observed from my youth." No one in society could charge him with the violation of any social right; or the infringement of any social law. This was good; but "One thing" yet is wanted. What?

Sixthly: *Not susceptibility of conscience.* "He was sad at that saying and went away grieved." It was the grief of conscience, for the want of heart to act in harmony with right. There may be moral susceptibility and yet the "One thing" lacking. What?

Seventhly : *Not Christ's appreciation of the good in him.* "Then Jesus beholding him loved him." All that was good in him Jesus saw and valued. He the just ONE and the kind, will give the worst man credit for the least virtue that may be in him.

What then, is the "One thing?" One word expresses it. LOVE. He could not sell all that he had, and give to the poor :—he had not the heart for it. This was the lacking thing. By LOVE I do not mean *natural kindness*, mere amiability of temperament, not *emotional charity*—a thing that rises occasionally in the heart of the most selfish in the prospect of suffering, or under the wand of some eloquent appeal—*nor conventional philanthropy* which subscribes to benevolent institutions by custom or by rule. *But that affection which has such a supreme regard for the character of God, and the interests of others*, that all private interests are kept in the back ground and absorbed ;—an affection which swallows up the material in the spiritual, the individual in the universal, the human in the Divine.

That this LOVE is the "One thing," the *substratum* of moral goodness, is obvious—

First : *From the constitution of the human soul.* (1.) The deepest craving of the heart is to love—it rests not until it finds some subject on which to centre its affections. The tendency of love is to bury self in the object—to sacrifice self at its shrine. (2.) The impossibility of conscience smiling on any action but those of disinterested affection. A sycophant world may praise selfish actions, but the conscience cannot ; no bribery or sophistries can induce it to do so. And if conscience approve not, what are we? (3.) There is no principle but LOVE that can secure a full and harmonious development of our nature. You may as well endeavour to make the seeds in your garden grow and ripen to perfection by excluding the sun, as to endeavour to cultivate to perfection the germs of your spiritual being without disinterested love. It is obvious—

Secondly : *From the teachings of the Bible.* The scriptures teach that love implies "the whole duty of man," that it is especially the "new commandment," and that whatever else we have, if we have not this love, we are nothing. (1 Cor. xiii.) The absence of this love from any soul is—*chaos—disharmony—hell.*

Brother, have you this "One thing?" Remember that without it, whatever else you may have, you are morally worthless and wretched; you are a cloud without water; you are a star wandering from your orbit, without law, without light, without life, rushing into boundless gloom and ruin. Remember that to love others truly and disinterestedly you must love God supremely; that true philanthropy ever springs from piety. Remember that to love God you must study His moral loveliness, for it is only as the heart muses that the fire will burn; and remember that to study the character of God you must look at Him as He appears to you as a *sinner*, in the life of Him who is "the brightness" of His glory and the express image of His person."

SUBJECT :—*Calmness in Death : its Philosophy.*

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."—2 Tim. iv. 6, 7, 8.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Forty-eighth.

Who would not desire calmness in death? To be unharassed by any painful memories, or dark forebodings in that sad hour which awaits us all; that hour when the mystic ties between soul and body—time and eternity—are giving way; when the world and all its concerns will roll away from us like a dissolving cloud, and eternity break in strange and startling lights and sounds upon our souls? O to have a

calm and unruffled spirit then ! Who will not join in this prayer ?

This calmness the apostle had when he wrote these words. Death was before him, and that in the most terrible form of martyrdom, and yet how self-possessed and calm. What is the philosophy of this calmness ? on what is it founded ? This is an important question ; and the text will answer it. The text shows us that there were *four things* in connection with Paul's mind which can make any man calm in death.

I. A SOUL-ABSORBING INTEREST IN THE GREAT CAUSE OF UNIVERSAL TRUTH AND BENEVOLENCE. That Paul had this, is clear from two things. First : *His present position*. "He was now ready to be offered." He was a prisoner at Rome, and the hour of his execution seemed at hand. He was like the victim at the heathen altar, on whose head the oil and wine had been poured, and thus doomed to be sacrificed ; nothing was wanting but the act of the executioner. The block and the axe were ready. Everything ready, awaiting the fatal stroke. Death in its most ghastly and most terrible form was before him. This was his present position. Secondly : *His present work*. What did he do in this position ? Was he taken up in bemoaning his hard fate ? or in forming stratagems in order to deliver himself ? No. His great heart is absorbed in thoughts about the cause of Christ and the interests of universal man ; and he sits down and writes a long letter to Timothy on these great subjects, most solemnly charging him to be earnest and faithful.

Who does not see that the soul-absorbing interest in the cause of truth and benevolence, which the apostle now displayed is, of itself, sufficient to account for his calmness in the prospect of martyrdom ? Death is a personal event, and just as the soul becomes the subject and organ of benevolence, it becomes oblivious of all that is merely personal. As the tide of patriotism rises in the heart of the patriot, his concern about his own life weakens, and as the tide of religious feeling rises in the breast of a saint, the fear of death,

and even the horrors of martyrdom will depart. If you would have a calm death-bed, cultivate Christian charity, seek to lose yourself in the great things of God. But if you would have a death-bed of horror, be *selfish*, make self your all.

Another reason for calmness on the death-bed is :—

II. AN ACCURATE CONCEPTION OF WHAT DEATH REALLY IS TO THE GOOD. Paul looked upon death merely as a “departure.” The word means *loosening*, and is applied to the unfastening of a ship preparatory to her departure from the haven. (1.) *The barque fastened in the haven is our mortal life.* It is hemmed in within a small area. It is made for sailing abroad, the boundless ocean rolls around it, and propitious winds are blowing, inviting it abroad. But it is tied to the spot. So with the soul in the body. It is fastened down to a most contracted sphere—fastened by animal sympathies, by secular engagements, by domestic concerns, &c. It is made to go abroad ; the immeasurable sea of truth and being and eternity heaves about it, but it is tied down. (2.) *The barque in the process of unloosing is death.* Most of the unfastening work is done outside. There is a little excitement on board, a little vibration in the giving way of one cord after another, but the barque is safe, and every agent employed in the unfastening respects the safety of the barque. This is death. Death is the soul loosing itself from the little harbor of this earthly life. (3.) *The barque fairly out at sea is our after-life.* See her with every sail hoisted, filled, and gently pressed, by the propitious gale. How gallantly she moves through those azure waves, which seem to play about her with mingled love and joy, dancing ever to old Ocean’s notes of majesty and might ! The sky, too, like a divine mother, all smiles, bends lovingly over her as if to enfold her in a warm embrace. Faint picture this ! methinks Paul would say, of the saintly spirit after death ! The soul is not made to be tied down ; it has instincts for the Infinite. Now such a view of death as this is certainly adapted to make one calm in the last hour. If Paul had

felt death to be either the end of his being, or the circumscribing of the sphere of his being, he might have been terrified at the prospect. But the reverse of both he felt.

Another thing which Paul had to make him calm in death, was :—

III. DELIGHTFUL MEMORIES OF THE MANNER IN WHICH HE HAD SPENT HIS LIFE. Memory is generally active at death. She goes back to the father's house, &c. She conjures up the ghosts of long forgotten crimes. Dark memories make a terrible death-bed. But what was Paul's memory? "I have fought a good fight," &c. (1.) *Life is a battle, and he had fought well.* A battle not against existence, its rights, and enjoyments; but against its errors, its perversions, and its woes. (2.) *Life is a race, and he had run it well.* "I have finished my course." (3.) *Life is a trust and he had kept it well.* "Kept the faith." With such pleasant memories as these he might well be calm.

Another thing which Paul had, that accounts for this calmness is :—

IV. A SOUL-ENRAPTURING VISION OF THE FUTURE INTO WHICH HE WAS ABOUT ENTERING. "Henceforth there is laid up for me," &c. Uncertainty about the future might well make one anxious on the death-bed. I wonder how Socrates could have taken the cup of poison so calmly. "It is now time," said he to Plato, "to depart; I indeed to die, but you to live; to which of us is assigned the happier lot is known to God only." Paul had no such uncertainty; on the contrary, he saw a bright future. (1.) He knew that in the future he should receive the *highest righteous exaltation*—a "crown." He does not, of course, mean that we shall literally have crowns in heaven. But poor foolish man regards a crown as the highest sign of dignity. Paul accommodates himself to man's weakness. It means dignity. Also a "righteous crown." Most human crowns have been gotten through unrighteousness. (2.) He knew that the

highest righteous exaltation *would be conferred upon him by the highest being.* "The Lord the righteous judge." Not a subordinate, nor a partial and unjust sovereign. This would destroy its worth to Paul. (3.) He knew that this highest righteous exaltation would be conferred upon him by the highest being *on the most glorious occasion.* On "that day." "That day" when the universe would be assembled to witness it. "That day," &c. (4.) He knew that this highest righteous exaltation would be conferred upon him by the highest being on the most glorious occasion *in common with all the good.* "Not to me only but to all," &c. If Paul had felt that he only would have the honor, his benevolent nature would not have appreciated it. He rejoiced that all the good would participate in the same.

Let my mind be like Paul's: let the cause of God, truth, and humanity, absorb my thoughts, let the same beautiful idea of death possess me, let the memories of the past in the last hour be approving, and let my future spread out as attractively as his;—let these things be mine in my last hour, and then amid the solemnities of that dread season I shall be as calm as was he.

SUBJECT :—*The Wants of Men, and the Supplies of God.*

"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"—Rom. viii. 32.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Forty-ninth.

THREE considerations will help us to comprehend and realize the wonderful meaning of this passage :—

I. THAT MAN REQUIRES IMMENSE SUPPLIES FROM GOD TO SECURE FOR HIM A HAPPY DESTINY. These supplies are of two classes, the ordinary and the extraordinary. First: *The ordinary.* All creatures must be dependent upon

communications from their Creator, for being and well-being, so long as they live. The wants of intelligent beings, who are progressing in knowledge and virtue, increase as they advance. The wants of a man are greater than those of an infant. The wants of civilized nations are greater than those of savage tribes. As an intelligent being advances, his need multiplies, his spiritual capacities expand. The more knowledge and virtue a progressive soul receives, the more it requires. Angels, saints, and seraphs will ever require increased communications from God. Independence is the desire and boast of the foolish sons of earth. It is not known in heaven. The greater the creature the more deeply does he feel his dependence. What oceans of blessings will one solitary spirit require from God, to make it happy through the endless ages of its history! Secondly: *The extraordinary.* He needs the pardon of his sin—the rectification of all the errors connected with his intellect, conscience, and heart. He requires supplies of moral power to vanquish his spiritual foes, to resist the evil and to pursue the good. Thus he requires from his Maker infinitely more than an unfallen spirit.

Another consideration is :—

II. THAT THE GREAT GOD HAS ALREADY BESTOWED ON MAN A GIFT OF UNUTTERABLE WORTH FOR THIS PURPOSE. Who can express the infinite value of the gift in language more simple and significant than that which Paul employs in the text? First: "*He spared not His own Son.*" *Not His own!*—What! Worlds, systems, universe? These are toys in the comparison. But His own Son. His "only begotten Son." "His well-beloved Son." He spared Him not; did not keep Him back as He might have done, when the miseries of humanity cried for Him. Secondly: *But delivered Him up.* To what? To the heart of friendship—to the seat of honour? No, to the wrath of His enemies, to obloquy, to insult, to ignominy, to unutterable anguish, to the hottest rage of hell. Thirdly: *For us all.* Who are

the "all?" To whom did Paul write? If you say to the Romans only, then his letters, and the Bible itself, are obsolete. He wrote to generations, he wrote to humanity; and every man may take up his words and speak them to his circle—"us all." God said to Adam, "Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." Did the great Maker mean those herbs and trees, those green fields and forests, only for Adam? Has there ever lived a man who has not felt in his soul that the Creator has said that to him, and that he has property in those natural productions which cover "the face of all the earth"? Paul spoke to the Romans as God spoke to Adam. He spoke to humanity through them.

Another consideration is :—

III. THAT THIS GIFT OF UNUTTERABLE WORTH IS A CERTAIN PLEDGE TO THE CHRISTIAN THAT WHATEVER ELSE IS NECESSARY SHALL FOLLOW. "How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" We say to the Christian. It is no pledge of course to others, for others have not availed themselves of it. The argument is from the greater to the less, and may be illustrated as follows :—

First :—*That this greatest gift is of more worth than any amount of blessing that a Christian can possibly require through the interminable future of his being.* Let your imagination endeavour to sum up all the blessings that a sainted spirit could by any possibility require through its endless career; and what would the mighty sum be, in comparison with the gift of Christ? A few passing clouds swimming in the atmosphere, laden with drops of rain, to the immeasurable oceans from which those clouds were drawn. So long, moreover, as the oceans roll you may expect the clouds, and the showers. Secondly : *That this greatest gift was bestowed for the same end as that for which every other blessing will be needed.* What are other blessings needed for? To complete our happiness.

Was Christ given to effect some *partial* and *temporary* good for man? If so, that good having been realized, His work would have furnished no pledge for any future communication. But what is the fact? He was given "*to perfect for ever them that are sanctified.*" The Divine gift of Christ to man is worse than worthless unless this end is obtained; and this end cannot be obtained without some comparatively small blessings. Is it not certain that the being who gave the greatest, and whose love and capacity are as great as ever, will give all the smaller blessings that are necessary? Thirdly: *That the greatest gift has not in the slightest degree lessened either the love, or the capacity of the Giver.* If the greatest gift had done so, its existence would have furnished no pledge for other supplies, however few and without value. But this is not the case. The gift is infinite, but the heart of the Giver is as benevolent as ever, and His means as ample. He is able "to do exceeding abundantly," &c. Fourthly: *That the greatest gift was bestowed when Christians were not in a position to appreciate the favor.* Universal man was at enmity with God when He gave Christ. There was not one to welcome Him. He came to His own," &c. But Christians, through the change effected in their nature, can, to some extent, value all other forces required. Fifthly: *That the greatest gift was bestowed without asking;—Christians are praying for what else is necessary.* There was not a human being that prayed for the gift of Christ. No one would have ventured to invoke such favor if he desired it;—and no one desired it. But Christians are praying for all other necessary supplies. Prayer is their breath. And God has pledged answers to prayer. "Ask, and ye shall receive."

Take heart then, Christian. Do you feel your necessities to be great? Do you think of what you will want to meet future temptations and future trials? Do you think of what you will require in dying hours, and in the dread transactions of the judgment, and in the endless ages that are to follow? Don't be anxious. He that "spared not His own Son," &c. The good man who maintains a strong and grow-

ing faith in the infinite beneficence of God, for all the supplies that he by any possibility can require through his interminable future is

“Seated on a mount serene
Above the fogs of sense, and passion’s storm ;
All the black cares and tumults of this life,
Like harmless thunders breaking at his feet,
Excite his pity, not impair his peace.”

SUBJECT :—*The Infinitude of the Divine Resources.*

“Thou hast kept the good wine until now.”—John ii. 10.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Fiftieth.

JESUS had just left the solitude of the wilderness. There He had won the most memorable victory recorded in the annals of the Universe. He had proved Himself superior to the Prince of Darkness, by resisting the most insidious and powerful temptations. Having exchanged the helmet for the crown, He finds His way to the festive board of a marriage, in Cana of Galilee. Our present purpose is not to expound the narrative of the feast, but rather to employ the words in an accommodated acceptance, so as to illustrate the sublime fact, that God is “*able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.*” Taken in this sense the passage suggests—

I. THAT THE DIVINE BEING MOVES BY A HIGHER LAW THAN MAN UNDERSTANDS. “My thoughts are not your thoughts,” &c. See how man would have acted under the circumstances : “Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine ; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse : but thou hast kept the good wine until now.” (verse 10). Man thinks how God *should* act ; and even marks out a little circuit in which he imagines the Divine should move ; but God works by his own law : He walks by a hidden path

into the realms of light. For illustrations of our propositions, we have merely to refer to (1) the developments of Providence ; and (2) the economy of Salvation. All *human* ideas seem therein confounded by methods of accomplishment which transcend the genius, and surpass the imitation, of finite intelligences. Man occasions himself much pain by attempting to do that which is beyond his executive ability : if he would cease to intermeddle with the evolutions of Divine law, he would prevent self-disappointment, and escape direct punishment. The passage suggests—

II. THAT THE DIVINE BEING EVER ASTONISHES HIS PEOPLE BY DISPLAYS OF SURPASSING LOVE. He does “exceeding abundantly above all” &c. Sometimes we think God cannot exceed *this* or *that* manifestation of mercy or power ; but behold He rises higher still ! In passing along the path of life, He scatters on our way one gem brighter than another ; and at stage after stage of our pilgrimage, He presents a cup sweeter and deeper than its predecessor ! Let us never imagine that we have received the *best* that God can give us : for He is “able to do exceeding abundantly” &c. God never gives sparingly : if He gives peace, it is a “peace that passeth understanding,” if He gives joy, it is a “fulness of joy,” and if pleasures, they are “pleasures for evermore.” Here is consolation for the mourning Christian ! The passage suggests—

III. THAT MAN IS SOMETIMES PRAISED FOR THAT WHICH HAS COME DIRECTLY FROM THE HAND OF GOD. The guests praised the *Bridegroom* : no higher hand was recognized. Though this was *natural* in the case before us, it reminds us of the truth we have now affirmed. So it is in *Politics—Legislation—Morals*. In these matters we often look no further than the mere *agent*, whereas *all* good ideas in the entire domain of thought, are to be traced to the Infinite Intelligence. In this, infidelity has erred : it has stopped short at *second* causes, or mistaken them for primary ones. On

beholding a good moral exterior, infidelity has exclaimed, "see what can be done apart from Christianity!" forgetting that so many are the indirect and reflex influences of this Divine system that they permeate every development and ramification of moral existence. Learn this lesson : Where *man* fails, *CHRIST* succeeds. "When they had no wine," &c. The passage suggests—

IV. THAT THE DIVINE BEING OFTEN PRESENTS THE RESULT WITHOUT REVEALING THE PROCESS. It was so in the case before us : quick and noiseless as the creation of light, the process was completed and the result presented. In certain departments of the moral universe, *processes* belong to God—*results* to MAN. We do wickedly in intermeddling with Divine processes : such is our instinctive curiosity that we wish to *see* element after element compounded in the cup of life. God, however, forbids the sight ; thus teaching us that it is His prerogative to *minge* the portion, and our duty to *drink* it. If we snatch the cup out of God's hand, we shall find it full of poison ; but if we wait in holy patience until He pronounces it *ready*, we shall find it the cup of healing and of life.

These four great principles are fitted to teach us lessons of practical wisdom :—First : *In every advancement of life, let us recognize the Divine hand.* Is the wine of our existence better *now* than ever it has been ? Let the praise be God's. Muscle, energy, tact, perseverance, should not be idolized : God is the True Object of Gratitude for all blessings. Second : *Distrust not the resources of Heaven.* God has at His command "the unsearchable riches of Christ." "Eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard," &c. Third : *Let inquisitiveness be subordinate to thankfulness.* The guests did not fritter away their time in inquiries as to *how* the wine was made ; they *drank* it with delight. So let it be with us in reference to the mercies of life ; though we cannot *understand* all, we may be *thankful* for all.

Here we have a great principle suggested, viz :—*God has always something in reserve more than He has communicated.*

“He is able to do exceeding abundantly,” &c. This principle is immutable. We shall test it in all the vast and countless millennial ages of the future. As we wing our flight from planet to planet, and open volume after volume of the Divine Will, we shall test it. As we approach nearer and nearer the eternal throne, we shall test it. In all stages of our existence we shall confess it,—all ranks of intelligence shall own it, and the universe shall close each period of its existence, with the thankful exclamation, “Thou hast kept the good wine until now !”

J. PARKER.

SUBJECT:—*The darkest Picture in Human History ; or the Extremity of Anguish.*

“And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.”—Rev. ix. 6.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Fifty-first.

WHETHER “those days” spoken of in the verse have passed, or are yet to dawn, I have not the prophetic power to determine. History, however, informs us that such days have been, and such days may yet transpire before “the end come.” Certain it is, that the Bible teaches us that there is a world of retribution, where such days are common, where they make up the long black history of the accursed population. We take the words as a picture of extremest suffering. Were we asked to describe the extremest anguish to which a being could be subject, in the fewest and most significant words, we would say, *that it would be a state where death would be sought as a relief, and where this relief, though earnestly sought, would never be obtained.* These two things you have in the case of the persons spoken of in the text.

I. HERE YOU HAVE A STATE OF MISERY IN WHICH DEATH IS SOUGHT. First: *Death is universally regarded amongst men*

as the greatest evil. It is the king of terrors. Ill health, disappointment, poverty, &c., are terrors; but death is "the king" of them all. It gives terror to everything terrible in the world. The ravenous beast, the furious storm, the destructive pestilence, the engulfing earthquake, are only terrible, because death is terrible. Secondly: *The relief which men generally seek in this world in their sufferings, is FROM death.* There are some who from aberration, it is true, have recourse to the razor or the rope, the poison or the river. But these are exceptions; so few as only to illustrate the power and uniformity of the law. The mariner will forsake his ship with its valuable cargo, the king will resign his kingdom, the wounded will suffer the amputation of every limb, if thought needful, to avoid death. "Skin for skin," &c. Yet in the text you have a state of being where *death is sought as a relief.*

II. HERE YOU HAVE A STATE OF MISERY IN WHICH DEATH IS SOUGHT AS A RELIEF IN VAIN. "And death shall flee from them." It is miserable to seek relief in the most deeply felt evil: but to seek it in such an evil *in vain* adds wondrously to the misery of the case. Fatigue, disappointment, the consciousness of lost energy, add to the anguish. Earth runs from death:—Hell runs after it, and runs for ever in vain. Methinks I hear an accursed spirit in the nether world crying after death, and saying, "O death, pause, turn back and quench my wretched existence; in yonder world I dreaded thee, I struggled hard against thee—I now invoke thy stroke, a stroke that shall annihilate me for ever!" And methinks I hear death, heartless as ever, saying, "I cannot destroy thee, I never had any power over thine existence; I could wither landscapes, breathe destruction into the face of every green field and forest, I could quench animal life, and have reduced all past generations of men to dust; but I *could never touch the soul.* The soul secured in her existence, 'smiled at my dagger and defied the point.' I cannot paralyze memory, I cannot extinguish the fires of conscience, I cannot destroy a soul."

In conclusion I infer—

First : *That the fact that men are exposed to such a state of being implies that some sad catastrophe has befallen our nature.* Could Infinite Goodness have created beings designed and fitted by their nature for such a state? No! deep within us has the GREAT ONE planted the love of life; and to seek death is to go against our nature. Sin explains it. Secondly : *That there is something in the universe to be dreaded by man more than death : and this is sin.* Death, though an evil, is not to be compared to sin. “The sting of death is sin.” Sinner, you now love sin, and dread death; in the future the case will be reversed, you will hail death and dread sin. Sin, though now robed in beauty and adorned with a thousand attractions, is the evil of evils. Thirdly : *That Christianity should be hailed as the only means to deliver us from this extremity of anguish.* It destroys sin; it “condemns sin in the flesh.”

SUBJECT :—*The Character of Genuine Reformers.*

“He was a burning and a shining light.”—John v. 35.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Fifty-second.

IN John the Baptist we have a type of an illustrious class—men who arouse torpid generations, who utter a “cry” whose reverberations after-ages hear. Their voice, like the trump of resurrection, summons forth entombed truth. When they appear, the hour “of collision between the old and the new”—between the Prince of Death and the Prince of Life, cannot be far distant. They all alike glow with holy indignation at the sin of the past, and with faith, hope, and love, eagerly point to “the Lamb of God which taketh it away.” Let us briefly consider some of the elements of their character.

I. THEY IMPERSONATE SOME GREAT TENDENCY. Reformations are no sudden, unconnected, events. They have their

causes immediate and remote. They are called for long before they come ; the call becomes more and more urgent ; at length it is imperious, irresistible. The want, profoundly felt, finds a more and more perfect expression when the reaction has commenced ; the evil is powerful only for the good. A tendency to reform is ever at work. In the reformer it becomes incarnate.

II. THEY ARE MEN OF FERVID SPIRIT. They can curse and bless. Not without deliberation ; but it is deliberation interested, engrossed. Logic, with them, is impassioned ; intellect inflamed. Their thoughts become visions, their contemplations facts. Instinct *seems* in their case to do the work of reason. The whole life is vital with super-human energy. Their very capacity, physical and mental, is enlarged. The triple being—soul, body, and spirit,—throbs with the intensity of the emotions within.

III. THEY ARE UNCOMPROMISING IN CHARACTER. In their time, the opposing principle is working out its last results. Institutions, whatever elements of good they may happen to contain, and however apparent to other eyes in other days, are to them the incarnations of evil. What they assail is so fearful in effect, that they shrink from its very associations. They aim therefore a deadly blow. Compromise is the work of calmer men in calmer times. The work which these men have to do is fearfully definite :—their character must be equally so.

IV. THEY ARE MEN OF PRE-EMINENT COURAGE. Their heroism admits not of a doubt. It is a genuine thing. Elijah, the Baptist, Luther, see what courage is displayed in their lives ! so calm and persistent—not intermitted. So universal in its action, as to be heedless of a monarch's frown and of a rabble's prejudice.

V. THEY ARE MEN WHO EXERT AN EXTRAORDINARY INFLUENCE. They affect the age in which they live in its highest,

most comprehensive, most pregnant, and influential relations. They meet the want which is under all others. Though they may not discover any new truths, they set in motion a new stream of thought. They wield a truth, if not the most important absolutely, the most important at *that* time. Those attributes which make every man powerful who endeavors to influence his fellow-creatures on the highest questions possible, are in them *intensified* to the highest degree. They are men born to produce effect. After-ages look back upon them, not as isolatedly grand, but as grand in action. It is theirs to move the passions of their race.

B. EVANS.

SUBJECT :—*Secrets, and the Revelation of them.*

“For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed ; neither hid that shall not be known.”—Luke xii. 2.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Fifty-third.

I. MANY IMPORTANT THINGS ARE KEPT SECRET FOR A TIME. Primary reference of this statement to evangelical truth. It may include, also, a reference to the mysteries of Divine Providence. But we pass these by, and restrict our view of this truth as it applies to man and his doings. First : *The real distinction between the Church and the world is a secret.* We judge of a man's Christianity by his profession and practice ; but we fail to arrive at the real distinction between men by these means. There are men who will be saved who make no profession, in our view ; and thousands who do profess are hypocrites. And then the qualities of Christian character can, to an extent, be counterfeited. The Church in the world, is like the son sent into the vineyard who answered “ I will not ; but afterwards repented and went.” The world in the Church is the other son who answered “ I go, and went not.” Secondly : *The nature and extent of our individual influence is a secret.* Three spheres in which our character is

influential either for good or for evil—in the family, in the Church, and in the world. And our influence is of two sorts—conscious and unconscious—voluntary and involuntary. And on the whole, predominantly *what* is it ; *for* the Gospel or *hostile* to it ? To us who are the sources of this influence it is very much a secret. Thirdly : *Our private personal history is a secret to others and partly to ourselves.* There is a private history of sin and depravity in each one's bosom, of which the world has no knowledge ; a secret chamber to which the nearest friend has not been admitted, where our secret idols are worshipped. To God they are no secret. But in respect to man we are all, more or less, adepts in the art of concealment. Our sins are partly secrets to ourselves. Motives are imperfectly analysed and known ; and habit has dulled the conviction of particular sins.

II. A TIME IS COMING WHEN THESE SECRETS SHALL BE DISCOVERED. First : *Some of them are discovered in this world.* Crimes against *human law*, however secret, are almost sure of detection. Sins which are crimes against Divine law, are often discovered in this world. Passion, or a blundering in the art of deception, often drives the hypocrite to expose himself to shame before God and man—and at death. Secondly : *But the future world will be the great revealer of man's secrets.* 1. God will reveal and publish them—Judgment day. 2. Heaven and hell will reveal every secret of the heart and conscience.

In *heaven* there will be no secrets of sin. A devil will not be able there, as here, to clothe himself in a seraph's garment. And a saint will not repress his holiest convictions, as he often does here, because of fear or want of sympathy. In *hell*, there will be no motive to concealment as here. The hopeless criminal doomed to die, unbosoms his most dreadful secrets.

CHARLES SHORT, M.A.

SUBJECT :—*Spiritual Ignorance the Cause of immense Evil, and the Occasion of immense Good.*

“Which none of the princes of this world knew : for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”—1 Cor. ii. 8, 9.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Fifty-fourth.

THESE words enable us to look on spiritual ignorance—*i. e.* ignorance of God and our obligations to him—in two very opposite aspects.

I. AS THE CAUSE OF IMMENSE EVIL. These princes of the world, through ignorance, “crucified the Lord of glory.” A greater crime than this was never perpetrated. It involved,—First : *The grossest injustice.* He was innocent—He had violated no law, human or divine. He was embodied virtue. His enemies and judges bore testimony to His innocence. Socondly : *It involved the basest ingratitude.* He not only did no evil, but He did *good*, and good only. He injured none. He blessed thousands and sought to bless all. “He went about doing good.” Thirdly : *It involved most heartless cruelty.* They crucified him. The most ignominious and excruciating death that infernal malignity could desire. Fourthly : *It involved most daring impiety.* Whom did they thus treat ? A man like themselves ? No. “The Lord of glory,” *i. e.* the glorious Lord. “Who is this King of glory ?” “The Lord strong and mighty,” &c.—Ps. xxiv. 8. Here is impiety. It is impious to trifle with His laws and rebel against His throne, but how much more so, to crucify the universal Lawgiver and King ! Now, that this spiritual ignorance was the cause of this immense evil, is evident from *two* considerations—First : *Because it is itself an evil, and like will produce like.* There is an ignorance which is a calamity, and not a crime. There are two things necessary to knowledge—*Mind* and *means*. When either of these is absent, ignorance

is a calamity, but when they are present, it is always a crime. These princes had both—they were not idiots—otherwise they would not have sustained the position they did—"princes." They had means by which they could know Christ : the Old Testament Scriptures, which prophesied of Christ they had. John the Baptist, the herald of Christ, had been amongst them. Christ, too, they had ; they need not have been ignorant. Their ignorance was a sin ; and sin, like virtue, is propagated. That this ignorance was the cause of this evil is clear from the fact. Secondly : *Had it not existed, such an evil could never have been perpetrated.* The text leads us to look at this spiritual ignorance—

II. AS THE OCCASION OF IMMENSE GOOD. This crucifixion introduced, Paul tells us, things that "eye had never seen nor ear heard," &c. These words which are taken from Isaiah lxiv. 4, are often thoughtlessly applied to the heavenly world. But the following verse states that the things are revealed by His spirit now. If you ask, what are these things which are brought to light by the crucifixion, I would say, summarily, God's love to the world and His method of saving it. Divine pardon—spiritual purity—immortal hopes, are all things that come through the crucifixion. The "eye had never seen," the "ear had never heard" these things before, nor could the human heart form a conception as to how God could be "just, and the justifier of the ungodly."

From this subject learn—

First : *That the sinner is always engaged in accomplishing that which he never intended.* These "princes" now did two things they never intended. 1. *They ruined themselves.* It brought upon them and their country in this world, tremendous judgments—and what in the world to come? Sinner, what are you doing? You are ruining yourself, but you do not intend it. You do not intend to destroy the liberties and quench the hopes of your soul,—to reduce your spirit to a fiend. You do not intend sweeping every star from the sky of your destiny, and covering it with

thunder-clouds ; but you are nevertheless doing it in the commission of every sin. 2. *They served God.* They executed the plan of the great God. "Him being delivered," &c. God overrules evil for good. "He makes the wrath of man to praise Him." So it is with sinners now. We have not to determine whether we shall serve God or not ; we have to determine, *how*—by our will or against it. Secondly : *Whatever good a man may accomplish contrary to his intention is destitute of all praiseworthiness.* What oceans of blessings come to our world through the crucifixion ! Yet who can ever praise the crucifiers ? they are doomed to the execration of ages. Thirdly : *That no man should act without an intelligent conception of what he is doing.* How many act from prejudice, custom, blind impulse ! How few have a right conception of what they are doing !

SUBJECT:—*Persecution for the Right.*

"This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."—Luke xv. 2.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Fifty-fifth.

VIRTUE personified, living and acting among us, did not awaken universal admiration and love. He, who spake of truth as never man spake, and whose life was in its every phase perfect, was surrounded and followed by deep and implacable hatred. The ridicule and opposition of the Jew were His portion ; whilst the Pharisee, proud and remorseless, was ever on His track—"to entangle Him in His talk,"—to stir up the bitterest feelings of the populace against Him, and to create, or seize, an opportunity of arousing the secular power to crush Him. His actions were misconstrued, His words perverted.

Did the common people listen gladly to His teachings and did the publicans and sinners—who wore no Phylacteries and worshipped in no temple—draw near for to hear Him :

then would the murmuring Pharisee turn from him with contempt, saying—"This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." It mattered not that He never forsook the temple and the synagogue. It mattered not that thousands, who heeded no other ministry, hung on His lips as He poured forth those deep, yet transparent truths. It mattered not that they followed Him whither He went, leaving alike their homes and their daily toil. It all mattered not to the supercilious bigot;—the complaint was still muttered forth, "This man receiveth sinners." Need we add that the Pharisees have had their followers in all ages of the Church? But we have not now to do with *them*. Their name is Legion,—their form Protean.* We shall regard—

I. THE FACT ON WHICH SO MUCH STRESS IS LAID. That He *receiveth sinners*. It certainly might have been *presupposed* that He would have chosen a far different class with whom to associate. *Thus*, according to Jewish tradition and belief, He was to be a great and victorious Prince. Then would he not place Himself at the Head of the army? Should we not look for Him in the palace, or at least among the great and noble? *Again*, seeing from a higher standpoint that He was rather to exert an influence on the minds of men, we should have expected Him to mingle with the learned and philosophic so as to gain a status for Himself and His doctrines, and bring first these master-minds to His views, and from these to select some, rightly moulded and thoroughly imbued with His spirit, to go forth and become themselves the centres of influence in the world. Or *lastly*, knowing the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, should we not have imagined that He would have been a recluse from society; or, at least, that the Temple would have been His dwelling place, and that around Him would be gathered all the devotion and piety of Judea? *But how was it?* Instead

* Strange that self-righteous bigotry and infidelity should so soon shake hands. Celsus, in the 2nd century, urges the very same thing as an argument against Christianity.

of the palace, was the stable. Instead of the throne the manger. There was an utter absence of all outward pomp in Himself, His relatives, and His chosen friends. Instead of the learned and wise, His bosom friends and constant companions were despised and illiterate fishermen. The murmur and sneer of the Pharisees were that He forsook *them*, the good and devout, to receive sinners and eat with them. And when we ourselves realize the fact that the Messiah, the Divine Introducer of a new dispensation, lived and acted under such circumstances, when others apparently so much more advantageous were equally open to Him, we hardly wonder at the feelings of the Pharisees, when they exclaimed "This man," &c.

II. THE INTERPRETATION GIVEN OF THIS FACT BY THE PHARISEES. In common with the Jews, they had the strongest prejudices and Oriental feelings in favour of national and class distinctions. These feelings were especially virulent against the openly depraved and those who gathered taxes for a foreign power, and who did it with extortionate rapacity. But in addition to this, the Pharisees separated themselves even from the rest of the Jews. "Trusting in themselves that they were righteous, they despised others." Yet, in spite of their sovereign contempt for the people, whom as ignorant of the law they pronounced accursed, they were held by them in such esteem and veneration as that they gave almost what direction they pleased to public affairs.

The mere fact, therefore, that Jesus passed them by, and chose to mingle with those whom *they* shunned and "cursed," would of itself suffice to account for their deep-rooted and implacable hatred.

The present is one of the many instances in which they thus appealed to common prejudices, (see Matt. ix. 10—xi. 19, &c.) Their object was two-fold. They considered—First: *That His claims to the Messiahship would thus be utterly nullified.* For, if His conduct were contrasted with the accredited messengers of God, how wide a difference was

evident. "John," they said, "Came neither eating nor drinking," &c. Secondly: *That even His character as a good man would be destroyed.* Whether contrasted with their own conduct, or, measured by their rules of virtue and religion. He healed on the sabbath, fasted not, washed not before meals, and worse than all, "received sinners, and ate with them." There was (in their eyes) no stronger evidence of friendship and intimacy, yet He, the pretended Messiah, who ought to have been a perfect exemplar, sought after and liked their company. It was a case of kindred minds.

III. THE TRUE INTERPRETATION OF THE FACT. The fact itself we not only allow, but glory in. Correctly to understand and explain it, we must examine the key-word given us by Christ as to the object of His mission. "I came not to call the righteous," &c. Then where *could* He have been but there? Where would you look for the physician in the pursuit of His calling but amid the sick and the dying? Where for the missionary, if not among the heathen, benighted and perishing? Where for the philanthropic Howard, but in the dark and poisonous convict cell? and where for the Saviour of the lost? The great and the wealthy knew not that they were "miserable and poor and blind and naked." The learned and the wise perceived not their ignorance and need of a higher teaching. The self-righteous scorned to seek a remedy whose need they felt not. So the Saviour, faithful to His trust, instead of descanting pathetically on the woes of humanity *from a distance*, personally went where disease existed and where its ravages were felt. And whilst He did not overlook, or undervalue, the synagogue as the place of worship or instruction, He yet went in search of those who had wandered, and *came not to Him*. In the crowded city and in the open field alike, would he speak of truth and love. He excluded none. Sinners, the vilest and most degraded, were called to repentance. It was the voice of one, whose tones and looks and deeds reached the heart, telling not so much of zeal for a cause, as earnest, God-like love for their

souls. He received *them*, sinners though they were, and ate with them. Learn hence—

First : *The evident purity of Christ's motives.* Had He courted the wealthy and the great, there might have been room for suspicion. He sought neither to wield the Roman sword for the extension of His cause, nor to enlist in it the sympathies of the Jew by opposition to existing powers. Secondly : *His love for man*, in undertaking and carrying out such a mission, though at so great a cost. Ease, affluence, power, were alike before Him ; but He, the Holy One, gave them up that He might mingle with the demoniac, the extortioner, the fallen one. Sure all should love the Saviour. Sinner ! despair not, for He receiveth sinners still. Christian ! admire, love and imitate.

S. T. A.

SUBJECT :—*The Good Man's Estimate of Life.*

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”
—Rom. viii. 18.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Fifty-sixth.

This estimate indicates :—

I. THAT A GOOD MAN IN THIS LIFE IS SUBJECT TO GREAT TRIALS. He is heir to all the sufferings common to the race. Danger—disease—pain—and death. He is the subject of moral mortification. He not only contends with all the evil forces in the universe out of himself, but also with all in himself. “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?” The sinner knows nothing of this. This mortification is life-long. A life sacrificed upon the altar of God's service is evermore one of self-denial and sorrow. It is a life baptized into the sufferings of the Son of God. The estimate shows :—

II. THAT A GOOD MAN ANTICIPATES A DESTINY OF UNPARALLELED HONOR. We are referred to "the glory that is to be revealed in us." It is a glory "in us." The heaven of the Christian is something in him, as well as something external. The germs of this paradise are in him now, awaiting the period when they may *burst forth* into all the *fullness and power of eternal life*. "It doth not yet appear," &c. This estimate asserts:—

III. THAT A GOOD MAN'S PRESENT SUFFERING IS NOT WORTHY TO BE COMPARED WITH HIS FUTURE GLORY. He has made a calculation of all, but he considers them unworthy of mention, in view of "glory." "For I reckon," &c. Three things will show that we are right in such an estimate:—

First:—*The great capacity of the human soul for future enjoyment.* The soul is capable of enjoying infinitely greater degrees of glory in heaven, than what man can endure of pain in the body on earth. Its powers will wax stronger for ever. Who can predict its ultimate majesty? Who can now speak of the unsealed fountains of joy at which it will drink! Secondly: *The modified character of earthly suffering.* There are intervals of ease, in every man's case. However intense his suffering, it is sometimes suspended, and he has a *well-spring of bliss within that lifts his soul to God*. There will be no suspension of our future exalted blessedness. What a thought! Thirdly: *Its comparatively momentary duration.* *Time to eternity* is much less than a drop to the ocean. The longest life of suffering is but as a moment to the eternity of glory before us. Christian! your combined trials on earth are but little bubbles on the river of life, your future glory is the ocean of blessedness, on which your triumphant spirit shall float in eternal rapture.

J. H. HILL.

Stars of Christendom.

ATHANASIUS.

(Continued from page 149.)

AS DEACON of the Church of Alexandria, Athanasius became associated with bishop Alexander, who was then engaging in a momentous conflict with his presbyter, Arius. The way of thinking, which regarded the Son of God, or the Word, as subordinate to the Father, and which was unhesitatingly connected with the doctrine of his emanation from the Divine substance, was now consistently pushed to its conclusion. Arius denied the eternity of the Son. This, moreover, was said to be the doctrine of Scripture. Arius continued to hold that the whole creation beside, was conducted through the mediation of the Word. All, however, was regarded from a moral point of view. The Word is a creature, naturally mutable, capable of transgression. Foreseeing, however, His actual perseverance in good, God granted Him the name of the Son of God, and all dignity and power involved therein. Such a degradation of the Redeemer was intolerable to the other party. They had received the apostolic witness of the true Deity of the Son, and this witness met with a response, ever clearer to consciousness, in living experimental knowledge. They believed that if this doctrine were abandoned, the whole virtue of saving truth would be abandoned therewith.

Among this party, the young Athanasius was prominent for dialectic sagacity, and depth of Christian insight. He chiefly contributed to the victory of this faith in the Nicene Synod in 325. This was the spiritual side. The external sanction was the business of the Emperor Constantine. He gave the legal sanction to the doctrine of the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father, and the generation of the Son from the essence of the Father. Thus the doctrine of a consistent minority was legalised, which the Emperor regarded as true, and as the only means of warding off pernicious error. The more indeterminate and ambiguous sentiment of a confused majority, headed by Eusebius of Cæsarea, was rejected, and Arius and Arianism condemned.

But the Emperor's assent to the Nicene symbol did not rest upon firm conviction, and different influences were able

to incline him to the opposite side. The victorious minority had now to contend not only with the Arians, but with the middle-party, afterwards called Semi-Arians, headed by Eusebius. Constantia, the sister of Constantine, had, when dying, recommended to him an Arian presbyter, who when acquired his confidence. The emperor urged the reception of Arius back into the fellowship of the Church.

Since the conclusion of the Council of Nice, the bishop Alexander, had died, and was succeeded by Athanasius in 328. The diocese was one of great importance, embracing Lower Egypt, together with the names or districts of Middle and Upper Thebaid, and extending from Pentapolis and Lower Libya to the Small and Great Oasis. The new bishop opposed the restoration of Arius, as bringing into question all that had been gained by the Church, and as threatening its independence. His opposition was inflexibly constant, spite of several Imperial threats. He was, however, so successful in confuting the repeated accusations of united opponents, that the Emperor again became gradually more favorable towards him. But they remit not their efforts, until, condemned by the scanty Synod of Tyre, he goes into exile to Treves. Arius, having been continually denied at Alexandria, restoration to the Church of which he had been presbyter, is about, by the Emperor's influence, to be received back into Church-fellowship at Constantinople. But he dies suddenly on the eve of the day appointed for his triumph, which leads to new party accusations. After the death of Constantine, Athanasius is recalled. But accused anew before Constantius, he is driven away by force, after a Synod at Antioch has deposed him. He finds shelter at Rome, and is restored by a Synod at Sardica in 347. On this, the Emperor summons him to his presence, and favorably imprest by the interview, issues letters in his favor. Festively received into Alexandria in 349, he works anew with greater energy and with blessing. In the West he has left behind considerable traces of his activity. During the life of Father Antony he awakes a taste for monachism, an institution by which the Church, while the masses were secularized, asserted herself in her most living members. But the time of rest is not to last long.

The rebellion of Magnentius gave adversaries new occasion for accusation, and the wavering Emperor yielded to his own humor and the crowd of opponents. Now began a sys-

tematic persecution ; first, of the men who stood on the side of Athanasius, and bravely defended the independence of the Church, Eusebius of Vercelli, Hilary of Poitiers, and others ; and then of Athanasius himself. Condemned by the Arian Synods of Arles and Milan, he was a third time banished. Now followed a season of vigorous persecution and heavy conflict, when every effort was used by the other side to render Arianism dominant, and to occupy the churches generally with Arian Bishops. But, drunken with victory, the proper Arians sought so decidedly to procure public esteem for their sentiments, that the better men of the middle-party came gradually to their senses, and were alienated from them. Thus, they themselves involuntarily contributed to the downfall of the Anti-Nicene party and the victory of the Nicene faith.

The result visibly appeared, when, after the death of Constantius and the accession of Julian, each party could only make its proper spiritual force available. Wise and mild in victory, as firm and decided in conflict, Athanasius, by virtue of truly Christian feeling, and his desire as well for the unity, as purity of the Church, was able by equity and forbearance, to gain over altogether those who were already attached to the right faith, and thus entirely to secure its victory within the Church. But since he was thus internally strengthening the Church, which was prest hard by the attempted restoration of heathenism, he drew on himself the disfavor of Julian. The Emperor could not allow the man to work on peacefully, who, even as a youth, in full persuasion of Christianity as the true and perfect religion, had condemned heathenism, and now, like a torch clearly blazing on high, shone far and wide, and with mature power and wisdom, did great damage to its cause. He was obliged to go for the fourth time into exile. And even this time was not the last. After Jovian had recalled him, the Arianizing Valens drove him again away. Fear, however, of the universally honored man determines him to the recall of his order, and henceforth Athanasius lives and works undisturbed. Still, in old age, he is full of fresh power, and has far-reaching influence, by word and writing, beyond any other in his community. With his Church he had, even when absent, remained united in spirit and prayer ;—her heavy trials he bore on his priestly heart. Witness his “ Festival Epistles,” wherein appear zeal and wrath against the un-

righteous ; pious submission, life and movement in the Word of Scripture. For this Church he had given body and life, rest and comfort, like a lioness fighting for her cubs, or a shepherd for his flock. Athanasius died in 373.

In what manner he overcame Arianism, with superior dialectic, and the mastery of high intelligence, drove it from the hiding-places of criticism, and victoriously maintained the truth against objections ; how he uncovered the nakedness of this Judaizing spoiling and heathenish metamorphosis of Christianity, perceiving in this error the annulling of the Redeemer's work and the lowest degradation of the Gospel—how he maintained the absolutely perfect Trinity, as much holding the eternal inner distinction against Sabellian confusion, as the unity and essential equality against separation and subordination*—how he proved this consubstantiality even in relation to the Holy Ghost, as alone answering to experimental knowledge and profound scriptural contemplation—how, finally, from this position he maintained the God-manhood against Apollinarian † mutilation, is manifest from a series of polemico-dogmatical writings, from which modern theology has much to learn, and which, though humanly imperfect, remain untouched in their demonstrations by the assaults of modern criticism.

The complete man, as he laboured, contended, and suffered, appears in his works, which are partly apologetical, partly polemical, partly exegetical and homiletical, partly biographical, and partly liturgical. The best editions are the Benedictine, 3 vols. folio, Paris, 1698, and that of Padua, 4 vols. folio, 1777.

The Athanasian Creed is named after the great Alexandrine teacher with about the same degree of correctness as the Apostles' Creed after the apostles. The latter summarily exhibits the chief matter of the Christian faith, which are founded upon the apostolic witness. The former sets forth the dogmas established by Athanasius. The various heretical sentiments are denied, and in their stead is taught the complete truth—the fundamental doctrine of the Three-One God and the Divine-Human Redeemer. In the more complete Latin form, the procession of the Holy Ghost is referred to the Son as well as to the Father, which is a sign that we

* Sabellius confounded the Persons, regarding the terms SON and SPIRIT as expressing only MODES of the operation of one Person. Others, by dividing the substance of the Godhead, fell into the error of Tritheism. † Apollinarius maintained that the Logos, or Word, supplied the place of a rational soul in Christ.

have not herein a work of Athanasius himself. This is clear also from the fact that the greater number of the manuscripts of his works want this creed. The Latin text is evidently the original, not the often altered Greek. The witnesses for the existence and estimation of the creed are, at all events, too late for its genuineness. As to when, where, and by whom, it was composed, opinions widely differ. There are arguments considerable, but not convincing, for the authorship of the North-African Vigilius of Tapsus, towards the end of the fifth century. It is possible that the creed originated in Spain, in the course of the seventh or eighth century, which is the opinion of Gieseler. Thence it probably passed into Gaul. Its sharply defined conception soon gave it authority and rank with the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene, which it maintained through the middle ages, and until modern times. Luther speaks thus of the Athanasian Creed : "It is so composed, that I know not whether any thing more weighty and glorious has been written in the Church of the New Testament since the time of the Apostles." Its authority gradually sank, when Voss had pointed out its want of genuineness. Its rugged dogmatic formality, and its commencement, which, as it were, crushes freedom of thought and appears to confine salvation to its confessors, have been fatal to its credit with many, and have caused great excitement in recent times. The prejudice, however, will vanish in proportion as it is understood that we have to deal only with its essential contents, that is, in so far as it exhibits the triunity of the Godhead and the perfect Deity, and perfect humanity of the indivisible Christ, and the full Western conception of the inner relations of the persons ;—the locking together of the unity which is involved in the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son. It will thus appear as the purest product of ancient ecclesiastical doctrinal thought. Therein lies its permanent importance, and never will the Christian Church cease to receive this essential doctrine, nor the Creed itself, so far as identified therewith, however its form may be altered and perfected.

The above article has been mostly adapted from two, by Dr. Kling, in Dr. Herzog's Encyclopædia.

W. C.

LITERARY NOTICES.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE SABBATH MADE FOR MAN: OR, THE ORIGIN, HISTORY, AND PRINCIPLES OF THE LORD'S-DAY. By the Rev. MICAIAH HILL. London: John Farquhar Shaw.

THIS Essay has gained the prize of £100 offered by the Council of the Evangelical Alliance. As might have been expected, it advocates the extreme, self-styled orthodox doctrine. Advocates, we say, for the style is rather that of one who seeks to conciliate adjudicators, than of one who speaks conviction. There is a great show of learning in the book, but we hope that the author's opinions on the subjects of Hebrew and Latin construction are peculiar to himself. He tells us, p. 341, and refers to Gesenius as an authority, that the particle *Vav* may sometimes be more correctly translated "with" than "and." On the strength of this he proceeds to say, that the correct translation of Gen. i. 5., latter clause, is—"And the evening with the morning was the first day." Every tyro in Hebrew knows that the sentence in question, rendered literally, is—"And there was evening and there was morning, day one." Again, p. 413, he translates, "*Neque sic tamen septenarium numerum morar, ut ejus servituti ecclesiam astringam,*" thus, "But the septenary number was not so sustained as to bind down the Church to it." He quotes from Heylyn a reference to a passage from Calvin, with which he compares another which he thus introduces—"Calvin, however, in his Institutes, speaks plainly on this point." But the passage quoted by Heylyn occurs in the Institutes just before quoted by our author! Misquoted we should say; for the word "Apostles," on which his argument depends, does not occur in the sentence, which reads thus—"Accordingly in the Churches he instituted, a Sabbath was retained for this purpose." The work bears—we speak with due deference to the adjudicators—evident marks of haste and perfunctoriness. We are not going, however, to review the doctrine it teaches, but shall request the mis-

represented Father Calvin—whom we regard with greater reverence than we do many of his profest disciples—to perform the service for us.

The Rev. Micaiah Hill reviewed by John Calvin.

See Institutes, ii. 8.

“I am forced to be somewhat longer on this matter, because now-a-days, unquiet spirits are disturbed touching the Lord’s-day. They complain that Christian people are nourished in Judaism, because they retain some observance of days. But I answer, that those days are observed by us contrariwise to Judaism, since we widely differ on this point from the Jews. For we do not celebrate it with the straitest religion, as a ceremony whereby we think some spiritual mystery is figured, but we take it as a remedy necessary for maintaining order in the Church. But now Paul teaches, Coloss. ii. 16, that Christians are not to be judged with regard to the observance of it (the Sabbath), since it is a shadow of things to come. He fears lest he have labored in vain among the Galatians, because they still observed days. Galatians iv. 10, 11. And he asserts to the Romans that it is superstitious for a man to distinguish between day and day : Romans xiv. 5. But who, besides a few demented folk, does not see what kind of observance the apostle has in view ? For they did not regard that political and ecclesiastical order for the end ; but retaining a kind of shadow of spiritual things, they obscured in the same measure the glory of Christ and the Gospel. They rested from manual labour, not as a distraction from sacred pursuits and meditations, but with a certain kind of religion, because by keeping holiday, they dreamed they were restoring the mysteries ordained of old. Now, it is against this preposterous distinction of days that the apostle inveighs, not against a lawful choice, conducive to the peace of Christian society. Accordingly in the Churches he instituted, a Sabbath was retained for this purpose. For he prescribes that day to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. xvi. 2, for collecting contributions for the relief of the brethren at Jerusalem. If superstition is feared, there was greater danger in Jewish holidays than in the Lord’s-day now observed by Christians. To despatch the overthrow of superstition, the religious day was taken from the Jews as a necessary means of preserving seemliness, order, and peace in the Church, another day was appointed.

“Yet not unadvisedly did the ancients substitute the day we call the Lord’s, in the room of the sabbath. For since the full complement of that true rest, which the old Sabbath shadowed forth, is found in the resurrection of the Lord, on that day which put an end to shadows, Christians are admonished to cling no longer to shadowy ceremony. Nor, finally, do I care for the number seven so much as to wish to bind the Church to its thralldom ; for I shall not have con-

demned the Churches which have other solemn days for their assemblies, if only they avoid superstition ; which will be secured if, the days being well arranged, they are made conducive to the sole observance of discipline and order. In a word, as the truth was figuratively delivered to the Jews, so to us it is committed without shadows :—first, that we keep perpetual life-long sabbatism from our works, that the Lord may work in us by His spirit. Secondly, that each one carefully employ himself, privately, as often as he has leisure, with piously reviewing the works of God ; then also, that all of us together observe the lawful order of the Church, appointed for hearing the word, the administration of the sacraments, and public prayers. Thirdly, that we do not inhumanly oppress our dependants.”

A TREATISE ON THE WILL, &c. By HENRY P. TAPPAN, D.D., LL.D.

A New Edition, revised and corrected by the Author. Glasgow : Lang, Adamson and Co. London : Ward and Co.

EDWARDS on the Freedom of the Will has been long and justly notorious as the redoubted metaphysical fortress of that New England Calvinism which has found disciples in the mother-country. Of this fortress, Tappan has been the most formidable assailant. We have heard indeed that a certain firm adherent of Edwards is in the habit of laughing at Tappan ; possibly finding this method easier than refutation. But a large and close volume of Michigan metaphysics is really no joke. Tappan's works on the Will have been too long before the public to need description. This volume is a reprint of them ; namely, the review of Edwards,—The Doctrine of the Will determined by an Appeal to Consciousness,—The Doctrine of the Will applied to Moral Agency and Responsibility, with an appendix on Edwards and the Necessitarian School. This convenient and comely Scottish reprint has been made with the author's concurrence and assistance. We cordially welcome it, and recommend the diligent and candid metaphysician to study this, as well as the work to which it is confessedly opposed.

ANALYTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE ROMANS. By JOHN BROWN, D.D. Edinburgh : William Oliphant and Sons. London : Hamilton, Adams and Co.

THE venerable man, who is the author of this exposition, has long and deservedly enjoyed the reverence of his own, and of other Churches as a saintly minister and a scholarly divine. Paul's Epistle to the Romans has been for many years the subject of his loving, earnest

and careful study. The result is a commentary, logical, rather than grammatical or historical; that is, on the basis of the results of the inferior criticism, the doctrinal edifice is here built up. In more extensive libraries, this work should be placed by the side of Stuart and Hodge, Tholuck and Olshausen. But if the poor, or the over-busy student, should seek for one exposition of the Romans, to stand alone on his shelf, we think that he would find this, which has greatly drawn from the best expositors, old and new, as well as from the original resources of the sagacious and maturely judicious author, to be on the whole preferable to any of the rest.

THE APOCALYPSE OF ST. JOHN. A New Translation, metrically arranged, with Scripture Illustrations. London: Jackson and Walford.

THE APOCALYPSE OPENED. By the Rev. WILLIAM HUTCHESON. Glasgow: William Collins.

WE have formerly mentioned the first of these with favor, but the reception of it for review affords an opportunity of bringing it again, and more fully, under the notice of our readers. The author is the Rev. J. H. Godwin, one of the Professors of New College, St. John's Wood, a gentleman distinguished for piety and gentleness, learning and mental power. The work greatly differs in method, principles, and results, from the crowd of writings on the same subject, stands indeed almost alone as a model of Scripture illustration, and as giving intelligent, clear, and satisfactory exposition of the Book of Revelation in particular. The method of the work may be made intelligible in few words. The author divides the Apocalypse into five books:—Addresses to Christian Churches in the Present Life,—Judgments of God on the Jews,—Judgments of God on the Heathen,—Judgments of God on Antichristian Agencies,—Description of the Christian Church in the Future Life. Each of these is subdivided into several Parts, and these again into Sections, whose titles are given in the margin. At the foot of every page are carefully selected references to various passages of Scripture, which tend more to illuminate the places on which they are brought to bear than is done by any commentary. Were the author to follow the same method with some other books of Scripture, he would render a most valuable service to Biblical students; but even this single production, small in size, not in importance, is inestimable as an example of right expository method. As to the interpretation of the Apocalypse, Mr. Godwin does not restrict the significance of the visions within geographical and chronological limits, or the symbols “to any single

form, or time, or place," but regards them as to be understood generally, as having a moral and religious applicability, a reference to character rather than individuals. The new translation is tasteful; and, although we are not satisfied with every rendering, is, in our opinion, often more correct and luminous than the authorized version.

Mr. Hutcheson's work is a very respectable specimen of a widely different school of interpretation. After our remarks on Mr. Godwin's, we could not of course give equal praise. Let the thoughtful read them both, and compare their methods and their results.

THE CORONET AND THE CROSS; OR, MEMORIALS OF THE RIGHT HON. SELINA, COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON. By the Rev. ALFRED H. NEW. London: Partridge and Co.

"THE Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon," however excellent in itself, having proved too voluminous and costly for popular circulation, Mr. New has been requested to prepare a smaller, cheaper, and more generally readable work. Well has he executed the task. This volume is precisely what was required; a faithful and interesting account of the character, life and labors of an excellent woman, whose career was greatly identified with the revival of godliness in the last century. We heartily recommend the work.

THE NEW DANCE OF DEATH, AND OTHER POEMS. By CHARLES BONER. Chapman and Hall. This poetical Holbein has caught the not very musical notes of Robert Browning; but the songs are essentially his own—fresh, powerful, and pleasing.—CHRIST OUR STUDY: A Practical Treatise upon Christ in His Official Character. By the Rev. PETER McLACHLAN. London: Judd and Glass. Excites respect by its affectionate presentation of some chief truths of the Gospel.—THE LIVING CHURCH: A Familiar Exposition. By the Rev. R. M. MACBRAIR, M.A. Judd and Glass. Ought to be studied by all ministers and members of Churches, filled as it is with clear, practical, and zealous enforcement of truth.—INSPIRATION: What is it? Where is it? and How Ascertained? In three Lectures. By the Rev. A. E. PEARCE. Judd and Glass. Two other Writings are stitched with this, namely, "THE NONCONFORMIST" REVIEWER on the Inspiration Controversy reviewed, by V. D. M., and the VIEWS OF Dr. PYE SMITH, Dr. HENDERSON and Dr. VAUGHAN *not* Identical with those of Dr. DAVIDSON. The whole appears a result of the Davidson controversy, and we suppose that V. D. M. is the same with Mr. Pearce. Mr. P. contends for plenary, but not for verbal

inspiration. Although he would perhaps have done better had he studied Dr. Pye Smith's sentiments with more care, yet the book is worth reading. To argue, however, for the inspiration of the Scriptures for the sake of establishing their authority, has always appeared to us a most unscientific procedure.—**A CRITICAL AND CANDID EXAMINATION OF THE JUDGMENTS IN THE KNIGHTSBRIDGE CHURCH CASES.** By WILLIAM PEACE. London: Partridge and Co. This volume will be especially interesting to Churchmen, and Dissenters would do well to inform themselves on the matters it treats of. The author contends on the Low-Church side. He is evidently well acquainted with the relevant laws and the history of ecclesiastical controversies in this country, but is, in some measure, lacking in clear godly insight, and liberal feeling. His book should be read by both of the contending parties, and by all who are interested in the contest.—**PRIMARY INSTRUCTION THE WANT AND THE RIGHT OF THE BRITISH PEOPLE: A Letter to the Right Hon. LORD PALMERSTON, &c., &c.** By JOHN YOUNG, LL.D. Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts.—A model of pamphlet writing. The subject is well presented under six heads:—The Case—What it is—State-functions and primary Instruction—Religion and primary Instruction—Compulsory primary Instruction—Hints towards a Plan—Strength and Weakness of State-action. The author distinguishes education from primary instruction, and contends for primary instruction by the State. Voluntary instruction, he says, means sectarian instruction. He proposes compulsory instruction up to ten years old. He uses plain and forcibly-put arguments, without cant of any kind. The pamphlet should be read by politicians and by all concerned in Education.—**LEAVES FROM A JOURNAL OF PRISON VISITS.** By MARIA SHEPHERD. Ward and Co. Written by one who has preserved the simplicity of the child while acquiring matured sagacity, and has added rich and active charity. He who can read this without softening must be hard indeed.—**TRACTS OF THE WEEKLY TRACT SOCIETY, 1856—7. Vol. IX.** London: 62, Paternoster Row. This little volume is the fruit of a very laudable effort for the benefit of the laboring classes. We think that the "Tracts" are capable of improvement in regard to health of sentiment and point of style.—**MY PARISH; OR, "THE COUNTRY PARSON'S" VISITS TO HIS POOR.** By the Rev. BARTON BOUCHIER, A.M. Second Series. John Farquhar Shaw. A number of very pleasing sketches, some in prose, others in verse, one of the latter being jocose; making us feel that the author possesses what, now-a-days, alas! is too uncommon, a genuine form of Christianity, as well as practical wisdom, and artistic power. The book ought to be widely read, and, from its exceeding attractiveness, will probably be so, at which none would rejoice more than we.



A HOMILY

ON

The Bible as a Grand Moral Painting.

“Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven: which things the angels desire to look into.”—1 Peter i. 9-13.

WE judge by comparison. We reach the unknown by the known; things seen throw their light on the unseen. Even our knowledge of God is attained in this way. By the light of those sentiments of love, justice, truthfulness, wisdom, and power, which are implanted within us, we discover the God which nature and the Bible reveal without. Eradicate these sentiments and the Eternal sinks for ever from our view. The Bible recognizes this principle, and deals largely in parables.

We shall now use this principle of comparison in order to clear and widen our views of the Bible. But whereunto shall we compare this Revelation of God? There are many things about us in which we might seek for it some parallel. It has been compared to the glorious sea, the flowing river, the majestic tree, and the symmetrical temple: and from each point of resemblance some bright ray of light has streamed

upon some part of this wonderful Book. Our text, however, has suggested to us the propriety of selecting a somewhat novel, but we trust not an inappropriate, or an ineffective medium of comparison. It is a *painting*—a well conceived and masterly executed painting. Looking upon the Revelation in this light, the passage gives us five points of observation:—the *extraordinary subject*,—the *distinguished artists*,—the *inspiring genius*,—the *illustrious spectators*,—and the *glorious purpose*.

I. THE EXTRAORDINARY SUBJECT. What is the subject? "The sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." Open this Book, spread out its pages, and what have you? A wide-spread canvass, on which is displayed this one great subject in every hue and form. There are other things, it is true, that you see here; but they are subordinate, they are in the back ground, and there, in order to give prominence and effect to this the one master subject.

This picture is divided into two parts. At one end you have the sufferings of Christ; at the other end "the glory arising out of these sufferings." The side on which the sufferings are depicted is full of incident, yet in dark shade. There you see the babe. In one part, you see Him lying in a manger; in another, in the temple undergoing the painful rite of circumcision; and in another, in the arms of His affrighted mother fleeing into Egypt. There you see the suffering man; "the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." In one part, you can see Him a wearied traveller at Jacob's well; in another, lying exhausted in a little skiff struggling in the tempest on the Galilean sea; in another, standing as a criminal before Herod, then Caiaphas, and then Pilate; in another, whipped through Jerusalem with a crown of thorns on His bleeding brow, the object of popular scorn, execration, and cruelty; in another, prostrate at midnight in Gethsemane, sweating blood beneath the pressure of a world's iniquities; in another, bearing His cross, emaciated, exhausted, bleeding, up the rugged hill of Calvary; and in another, nailed to that cross between two malefactors, and

under frowning heavens, and above a raging hell-inspired populace and a trembling earth, dying in inexpressible agony. This is one part of the picture, and it is a very dark part. Black, stormy looking clouds stretch over the whole; scarcely a ray of sunshine is seen; a little star now and then appears which is soon lost in the next black cloud, and that is all. Oh, it is very dark!

But on the other end of the picture you have a striking contrast. Here is "the glory that follows." Here you see Him rising from the grave as the conqueror of death, the prince of life, and ascending to heaven amidst the rapturous shouts of an exulting creation. Here you see Him enthroned as the sovereign of universal dominion, dispensing, on the day of Pentecost, that Spirit which works in the world until all His plans are realized, all His people saved, and all His enemies made His footstool. Here you see Him as the universal judge, before whose effulgence "the heavens and the earth pass away," and there is found no place for them. Here you see Him by the word of His mouth waking the slumbering dead of all generations from their graves, summoning them in one vast assemblage to His presence as their final judge, opening the books and judging every man out of the things that were written in the books. Here you see Him after the affairs of this world have been wound up, enthroned in the midst of the redeemed universe, receiving the ceaseless homage of the hosts of angels and the myriads of the saved. What glory will rise out of these sufferings! What new manifestations of God! What new motives to virtue! What new thrills of joy! As from chaos, this magnificent world arose, so from the sufferings of Christ, a system of glory shall one day emerge, that shall fill the universe with new and rapturous delights.

Amongst the lessons which this extraordinary picture suggests we may mention three:—

First: *The malignant animus of sin.* What produced these sufferings of Christ that you see depicted here? Sin. In His sufferings you see sin hating and murdering incarnate virtue. Not content with making its own subjects and

victims miserable, it aims its deadly blow at virtue herself. All the dark clouds that roll over the moral universe, that shoot their lightnings and hurl their thunders, are the exhalations of sin. "It brought death into our world and all our woe."

Secondly : *The benign tendency of the Divine government.* Glory comes out of these sufferings ; good is educed from evil. This is God's work. As the enmity of Joseph's brethren was made a blessing to the promised seed,—sin in the universe will be made subservient to the good of millions. As out of sin comes suffering, out of suffering shall come glory. The Divine government in this world of sin will break the clouds one day, and turn the sky of human life into azure,—sunny azure. When the picture of this world's history is finished whilst much suffering will be seen, far more glory will be discovered rising out of it. The light afflictions, which were but for a moment, will not be worthy of comparison with the glory that follows. I believe that the complete history of our world, as a whole, will be a bright one, a very bright one at last.

Thirdly : *The issue of suffering virtue.* The sufferings of Christ were the sufferings of virtue ; and they issued in glory. And so it will ever be. Goodness, however persecuted, tried, and afflicted, shall yet ascend the throne. In the unconverted world, suffering follows glory—in the true Church, glory follows suffering. Bear up my suffering brother. I am sure that thy picture, one day, will be in some humble measure, like this picture of Christ. Glories in an unending series of beatitudes, will be seen rising out of thy present suffering. "Our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

II. THE DISTINGUISHED ARTISTS. Who are the men that drew this wonderful picture ? The text speaks of two classes : The prophets who prophesied of the "grace that should come unto you ;" and the apostles who "reported." The prophets drew the dim and shadowy outline. These prophets in their day lived high up the mount of meditation,

away from the noise and bustle of the populace. On those quiet and devout heights of thought, visions of Jesus passed before their imagination. Sometimes he appeared in one aspect, sometimes in another, and in different aspects to the same observer at different times. Now He appears as "a child," and then as the "ancient of days;" now as the victim of His enemies, and then as the triumphant conqueror of empires; now as the "despised and rejected of men;" and then as the "desire of nations;" now in one stage of His history, in one department of His work, in one relation of His being, in one phase of His character, and then in others. Isaiah, who may be considered the "Great Master" of these prophetic artists, seems to have been blessed with the most complete view of His extraordinary life. He saw Him as "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" "wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities;" and as "the wonderful, the mighty God, counsellor," &c. He appeared from time to time in different phases to the imagination of these artists; and with the pencil in their hand they sketched Him, roughly it is true, but faithful still to life. We thank those sainted seers for their rough pencillings.

The other class of artists are the apostles. "The things" concerning Christ which the prophets "did minister," the apostles "reported;" they "reported" them when they preached the gospel "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." The apostles, as artists, had an advantage over the prophets: they had those outlines of our Saviour's history which the old prophets had drawn. They were very dim it is true, but there was a likeness in every feature, there was life in every touch. And they had in connection with this, the living subject, Christ. He had appeared amongst them, they had seen Him, and talked with Him, and they knew from the exquisite correspondence between the Jesus on the canvass of the prophets, and the actual Jesus in their midst, that this was He "of whom Moses and the prophets did write." They therefore filled up the outlines of the picture which the old prophets had drawn, gave body and hue to the

whole ; made it glow and breathe with life. We have, therefore, now, in this painting, Jesus set forth as evidently crucified amongst us ; “ we see Him as God manifested in the flesh, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

III. THE INSPIRING GENIUS. All real art implies genius. Genius to conceive the true and to embody it—*creative* and *executive* genius. Who was the inspiring genius of this painting ? Peter tells us that in the prophets’ case it was “the Spirit of Christ that was in them ;” and in the apostles’ case, “the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.” This appears clear from the very nature of the work. Before a being can draw a correct picture of another he must have two things—a correct image of the subject in his own mind, and the proper skill correctly to transfer that image to the canvass. One without the other will not do ; the two must go together to make the artist. Now we think that both the character of the subject of the Bible painting, and the method of execution, show that it could not have been produced by the unaided efforts of man.

First : *The character of the subject.* How did the prophets and apostles get a conception of Him whom they here depict ?—a character so thoroughly unique, so entirely adverse to *a priori* impression and observation too ! The highest virtue associated with the greatest suffering ; the most despised man in personal connection with God. Things so contrary meeting in the same one life, render the idea of man creating such a history out of his own imagination all but absurd. There is nothing in society, nothing in the human mind, out of which unassisted man could form the image of such a character. Indeed the text distinctly states that the prophets did not understand the character they were depicting. As various phases of His extraordinary life passed before them they “enquired diligently” about them ; “they searched what, or what manner of time, (or according to the best expositors, *person*), the Spirit of Christ which was in them did

signify." The "Spirit of Christ," within them, gave them an image of some strange personage, but they knew not of whom. You may as well endeavour to persuade me that the mystic pillar that guided the Israelites of old through the desert sprang from the Arabian sands, as to make me believe that the character of Christ sprang from the unaided imagination of mankind.

Secondly : *The method of execution.* A man may form a correct image of a person, and yet lack the artistic skill to transfer it to the canvass. This skill is generally the result of great training. But without training and without effort, these artists give you a representation of Christ true to life. The execution of the subject is, indeed, as unique as the conception. All mere human art is labor ; effort is seen in every touch. But these men, in a few simple words about what they saw and heard, present the hero life-life in very point. The "Spirit of Christ" that was in them, not only drew to their imagination the manifold aspect of His own being, but guided their pencil in every line, to portray the same. In human productions, both in literature and art, the author generally appears, and sometimes is offensively prominent. But not so here. As the idea of a master-musician is lost in the mind of the listener, amidst the divine strains of melody he sends forth, so the ideas of the apostles and prophets are lost in the mind of the student of this Book, amidst the Divine things they represent and the Divine genius they display. This Book appears to me as different from other human productions, as great living nature from the feeble works of man. Indeed the authors themselves ignore their own agency. The prophets say, "The Lord spake by us ;" and the apostles say, "Which things we speak not in words that man's wisdom teacheth, but in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." If men, by their unaided imagination could draw such a character as this, how comes it to pass that they have never done so ? Attempts have been made. Men of genius have spread out their canvass, and taken their pencil and sketched their ideal characters ; but none of the famed sages, moralists, or poets,

of un-christian lands or times, have ever produced a character at all approaching that of Christ. Oh ! it was the Spirit of Christ, that was in those prophets and apostles, that produced this picture.

IV. THE ILLUSTRIOUS SPECTATORS. "Into which things the angels desire to look." The word rendered "to look" is expressive of a somewhat intense effort. It is the same which describes Peter's position when he stooped down to look into the sepulchre in search of His beloved Master. Some suppose that there is an allusion here to the cherubim over the mercy seat, who were represented as bending down their heads as if to look into the contents of the ark. The idea is that angels are intensely interested spectators of this extraordinary picture. But why should they be so interested in it ?

First : *Because it is suited to excite their intellectual natures.* Anything extraordinary has a power to rouse the enquiring faculty. Were some marvellous phenomenon to appear in nature to-morrow it would set the intellect of all scientific men to work. "The sufferings of Christ and the glory that shall follow," are comparatively new and essentially strange events in the moral universe. These spirits had existed, perhaps, ages before Christ's incarnation. They were the "morning stars" that sang at creation's dawn. Many volumes of Divine history they had probably read and studied ; over many worlds they had sped their flight in quest of knowledge ; but nothing in all their research bore any resemblance to the extraordinary subject of this Book. Here they behold "the manifold wisdom of God : " they intensely "look into these things," and inquire into the Divine reasons of these marvels in the Divine government.

Secondly : *Because it is suited to excite their religious natures.* To a devout spirit nothing is more interesting or attractive than a manifestation of God. The eye of piety is ever on the Infinite One. Every word of His mouth, every effort of His power, every phase of His character, has a charm. In the sufferings of Christ and the glory that follows, angels see

a new and glorious manifestation of God. Here they see Him as the just God, and as a merciful Saviour. What a centring and radiating of Divine attributes are here !

Thirdly : *Because it is suited to excite their benevolent natures.* Whatever measure of government, whatever movement in society, whatever event in history, is thought likely to augment the world's happiness is always attractive to benevolent natures. What happiness they see secured in the sufferings of Christ ! What rivers of blessedness they see will rise from them that will roll through all ages and worlds ! No wonder then, that they are such interested spectators of this extraordinary subject. How sad it is that this painting, so intrinsically precious, in which the most illustrious beings in the creation are so profoundly interested, should be so disregarded by men for whose especial benefit it has been produced. It might have been thought that man's eye would have been ever fixed upon it, that his heart would have been ever in it, and that like Paul he would have said, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ."

V. THE GLORIOUS PURPOSE. First : *Look at the universality of the purpose.* For whom is it provided ? For whom did the prophets predict and the apostles "report ?" "Not for themselves," but "unto us they did minister these things." It is a painting, not for any one class ; not to be confined to the studios of the learned, to the mansions of the great ;—but it is for humanity. It should be hung up in every room of every dwelling, photographed on the heart of every man.

Secondly : *Look at the blessedness of the purpose.* "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." There are paintings in abundance, not only in private houses, but in public places of resort, suited to injure and destroy the soul, by kindling lusts that destroy its delicacy, pollute its conscience, and submerge its spiritual powers ; but this painting is to "save the soul." It is to rouse its spiritual sensibilities, draw out its spiritual affections, develop its spiritual powers, and centre its heart upon the true object of

love, adoration and worship. There is no other painting that can "save the soul."

There is much of cant in these days about the virtue of the fine arts. It is fashionable to extol them, to profess some acquaintance with them, and to acknowledge a desire to promote them. The cry of semi-reformers, and semi-philanthropists is, Let the nation throw open its museums, its galleries of arts, and crystal palaces, for the moral improvement of the people, on the holy day of God. Far be it from me to disparage art. I revere genius, and heartily hail her developments. Let her creations of the truly beautiful multiply, and let her mould them into the imperishable forms of poetry, music, sculpture, and painting. But I see nothing in her productions adapted to promote the spiritual well-being of humanity ; nothing to "save the soul." Your sweetest strains of melody, your finest pictures, your noblest marble figures, appeal only to the mere sensuous part of man. The lyre, pencil, or chisel, of mere genius can only touch the senses ;—they reach not the moral heart. Were man only a bundle of nerves ; did his well-being consist in the mere titillation of the senses, I would say, Let there be a picture gallery in every corner of the street on the LORD'S-DAY ; let music pour her enchanting waves of sweet sound through every avenue of your towns on the LORD'S-DAY ; let sculpture plant her most classic forms in every turn of our walks on the LORD'S-DAY. But believing, as I do, that man has moral affinities lying behind these mere sensibilities ; moral relationships underlying all our sensuous connections, stretching away into the infinite ; in one word, that he has an undying soul, that nothing but evangelical truth under God can save ;—I say that it is not only anti-scriptural and irreligious, but grossly *unphilosophical* to advocate the opening of those places on the LORD'S-DAY for the moral improvement and spiritual well-being of the people. The Bible is the only painting that can truly educate, improve, and "save the soul." Let the LORD'S-DAY be sacred for ever to its exhibition and nothing else.

The Genius of the Gospel.

ABLE expositions of the Gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers ; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its *widest* truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach ; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim ; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

THIRTY-FIFTH SECTION.—*Matt.* xii. 1.—13.

SUBJECT :—*Well-doing is Sabbath Keeping.*

“AT that time Jesus went on the Sabbath-day through the corn.” Thus opens our narrative. A walk in the cornfields on the holy day of God, with a sea of ripened grain waving in the balmy breeze, must have been a soothing and refreshing exercise to Christ and His disciples. That walk was not the walk of the mere idler, who with a dead and thoughtless soul is frequently seen sauntering in the fields on the sacred day of rest ; nor yet the walk of the mere sentimental admirer of nature, from whose mind the impressions of the grand and good evaporate in rhapsodic utterances. The mind of Jesus unquestionably was fully alive to the grandeur and goodness of the scene, and under His influences the disciples too, no doubt, participated, to some extent, in the lofty sentiments which stirred within Himself. The cornfield to them was a scene of worship ; a temple radiant with the glory of God.

The disciples, being hungry, began as they walked the fields to pluck the corn and to eat. The captious Pharisees, whose eyes were ever following them and their Master, in order to discover some fault, seized with malignant avidity this act, and represented it to their Master as an act of Sabbath-breaking. “ Behold Thy disciples do that which is not

lawful to do on the Sabbath-day." The language of affected surprise and horror at his disciples, was evidently intended as a reproach of Himself. As if they had said—The impiety of Thy disciples, which fills us with amazement and horror, plainly shows what a blasphemer their Master must be! Christ meets these cavilling hypocrites in the spirit of magnanimous calmness; first, *by quoting authoritative examples from their own history*. The examples are taken from an incident in David's life; and from the work which the priests had to perform on the Sabbath-day, "and were blameless." "Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungered and they that were with him; how he entered the house of God and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them that were with him, but only for the priests?" The incident here referred to, you have recorded in 1 Sam. xxi. There is a powerful relevancy in this example to the case in point. As if Christ had said—You profess to be governed by the Scriptures, and to have a profound reverence for David: Have you not read what he did? Do you not know that he and his men, in fleeing from the face of Saul, to satisfy their hunger partook of the sacred food which had been placed on the table of shewbread, and which the law prohibited to all but the priests and their families? My disciples have only done what David and his men did,—violated the letter of a precept from the instinct of hunger. If you condemn my disciples, you should condemn David also. Moreover, "have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath-day the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are blameless?" Every Sabbath-day (Numbers xxviii. 9.) they have much labor in slaying victims and presenting offerings. If labor is a profanation of the Sabbath, then those very priests profaned the Sabbath; but they did not profane the Sabbath—they were held "blameless."

He meets them also, socondly, *by propounding a true theory of the Sabbath*. He gives them to understand that the design of the sabbath was not to prevent men doing what necessity and benevolence would dictate, but to subserve man's true in-

terest. In every respect it was "made for man." From the narrative I infer:—

I. THAT IT IS THE ORDINATION OF GOD, IN RELATION TO MAN, THAT A SEVENTH PORTION OF HIS EXISTENCE ON EARTH SHOULD RECEIVE SPECIAL RELIGIOUS ATTENTION. We find in the narrative that not only the Pharisees recognise the Sabbath, but Christ Himself, who emphatically speaks of it as having been "made for man." The probability that the seventh day was observed from Adam to Moses to commemorate the glorious work of creation; the fact that it was enjoined in the decalogue and regularly observed through the whole of Jewish history; that Christ Himself, in such passages as the one under notice, recognised its existence; that the apostles whilst changing the day from the period of the resurrection of Christ, regularly devoted a seventh portion of their time to special religious devotions; and that down through all the subsequent periods of the Christian Church the disciples of Jesus have followed the example;—such considerations as these, without mentioning others, which tell in the same direction, are sufficient to satisfy me that the Great Author of our being intended one day out of seven of our existence on earth for special religious exercise. It is for man. Not like the Temple, for the Jew only. It is for *man*. Man in all ages and lands. "So long as man lives," says Stier, "he is to have a Sabbath of God: the necessity of his nature, and the ordinance of the Creator require this." We say for man *on earth*; for in heaven we presume no such arrangement is needed. All days are Sabbaths there. The eternity of the good is one Sabbath. We say *special*. We do not mean, of course, that men are not bound to be religious on other days; but that this day is to be used so that the religious feelings may get strength to rule us through all other days. The arrangement may be looked upon in a three-fold aspect:—

First: *Secular labor is an institution of God.* By secular labor I mean, the labor put forth to promote our material interests in this life. It is obvious to all that without

such labour our existence here, for any length of time, would not be possible. It is by mental skill and muscular form that we draw from nature the sustenance of our physical being. The Sabbath implies this labor. It is a provision "for man," and therefore man should labor. I do not see how those who lounge away their existence in utter idleness can enter into the meaning of this day. Food is for all, but the hungry alone can enjoy it. The Sabbath is for all, but the worker alone can appreciate it.

The apointment of the Sabbath implies :—

Secondly : *That man has other interests than those to which secular labor is directed.* The direct end of secular work is for the body ; The fact, therefore, that our benevolent Maker requires that on one day out of every seven of our earthly existence all the ordinary secular engagements of life shall be suspended, shows that man is a being that "cannot live by bread alone ;" that he has other relations than those that connect him with matter ; other wants than those which the world can supply. Man has an intellect to be cultivated, a heart to be disciplined, a soul to be saved. The Sabbath implies the existence and claims of the soul. It is a Divine memento to man that he has a spirit.

The appointment of the Sabbath implies :—

Thirdly : *That there is a danger of secular engagements leading man to neglect the higher interests of his soul.* Otherwise, Why should this day be devoted entirely to other than secular engagements ? We have already stated that as a rule, man can only live here by physical labor : the law is "he that does not work shall not eat." By the sweat of our brow we are to eat our bread. As the population increases and competition heightens, the struggle for mere existence will become more urgent. Visit your factories, your fields, your exchange, your commercial thoroughfares, and ask, Why all this earnest and perpetual effort ? The answer is, *To live.* Is this state of things an accident ? Is it a contingency that has sprung up un contemplated by the plan of God ? No. Our Maker saw all

this. He saw the pressure of secular engagements to which we should be subject; and He, in mercy and wisdom, appointed one day which should be devoted to other and higher purposes; lest in all this necessary whirl and bustle in order to preserve the body, the soul should be entirely neglected. God commands us to pause in our secular engagements every seventh day. Some men talk as if the world had out-grown the need of a Sabbath. Verily it becomes more and more necessary to our spiritual existence, as commerce increases its pressure on man. Let the Sabbath of England go, and the soul of England will soon sink under the turbid wave of materialism to rise no more.

From the narrative I infer :—

II. THAT IN THE JEWISH SYSTEM THIS SEVENTH PORTION OF MAN'S EXISTENCE WAS ENFORCED IN ALL THE PRECISION AND RIGOR OF LAW. "Behold Thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath-day." In that law, which was given to Moses amidst the terrible manifestations of Sinai, called the decalogue, the precept respecting the Sabbath is introduced by the word "Remember;" which I conceive implies that the obligation to observe it was known before. But now it came in all the definiteness and rigor of a positive enactment. The law refers not merely to the mere duty of its observance, but to the mode. On that day there was to be an entire cessation from "all manner of work." There was to be no buying or selling;* no food was to be prepared;† no fire was to be kindled;‡ he who did any work, if it were only the gathering of a few sticks, was to be put to death.¶ The legal form in which it thus came to the Jew was local and temporary. It did not thus appear to Adam, nor does it come in such a garb to the Christian. It is done away in Christ.

Why was the Sabbath given to the Jew in this rigorous form of law, guarded by such terrible sanctions? I presume

* Neh. x. 31. † Exodus xv. 5, 22. ‡ Exodus xxiv. 4.

¶ Numbers xv. 32.

not to find out all the reasons of the Divine conduct ; but I can discover certain uses which the arrangement subserves. It was not, of course, because a rigorous conformity to its mere letter was a virtue. Virtue was the same then as now, and will always be the same ;—it is as immutable as God Himself. And virtue is chiefly a state of the heart. But this strictness, nevertheless, had its uses.

First : *This legal method of enforcement served to transmit its memory to posterity.* So corrupt in heart and forgetful of God were the Jews, that unless they had been thus bound, at least, to a ceremonial observance of this day, it would soon have passed into disuse and forgetfulness. But through these legal and ritualistic regulations it was preserved, as the tables of the law, the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, was guarded and transmitted by that mysterious chest that was covered by the mercy seat. So this seventh day which God "made for man," was guarded and transmitted through long centuries by the ceremonial regulations of Judaism. Or, to change the figure, these regulations were a kind of ark that preserved it amidst the floods of depravity, and bore it down through all the ages that followed.

Secondly : *This legal method of enforcement served to expose the depravity of the human heart.* One might have thought that it would only have been for man to *know* of such a day in order to keep it with gratitude and delight ; that he would have hailed its return and rejoiced in its sacred hours, and blessed his Maker for its merciful appointment. But no, he will not respect it at all unless he is forced. The cupidity of the world would have long since destroyed this day, had not the mercy of God maintained it, and maintained it by force. He wrenched it from the hands of cupidity.

Thirdly :—*This legal method of enforcement served to impress upon man the importance of regarding it.* Mark the strict observance which the Hebrew race, for long centuries, rendered to this day. No work was done : the plough was still, the shops were closed,—and the wheels of secular life were

motionless. A deep and suggestive stillness hung over all the districts of Judea during its sacred hours. Mark the severe punishment which, without delay or mercy, was inflicted on those who dared so far to violate even the letter of the law, as to gather a stick to kindle a fire, in order to prepare their repast, or to warm them in the cold. What meaneth all this? Not that there was any virtue in this mere external observance, but that the *right observance of this day is of primary importance to humanity*. This was the lesson which the great God sought to impress upon the ages through the rigorous observance which he made the Jew, then in Palestine, for so many centuries to render to the Sabbath. What a true lesson is this! Philosophy and history combine to show the importance of the Sabbath to man. Where would be the religious sentiment of the world without it? and where would the world be without its religious sentiment?

I infer from this narrative:—

III. THAT A SUPREME REGARD TO THE SABBATH, AS A MERE LEGAL ENACTMENT, HAS NEVER, UNDER ANY DISPENSATION, BEEN TRUE SABBATH-KEEPING. This is implied in the cases before us. The Scribes and Pharisees had a supreme respect for the letter of the law. They would not walk a single inch on the Sabbath beyond the space prescribed by the letter; the last moment of the holy day must have expired before they would do “any manner of work.” They were true to the letter in every point. Yet did they keep the Sabbath? What was the state of their souls on this day? Was there a Sabbatic calmness within? Were their spirits wrapped in devout meditation on the works of Him who “rested on the seventh day and blessed it?” Did their hearts rise God-ward in loving and prayerful sympathies for their race on that day? No, no. They were saints without, but fiends within. Their spirits were a troubled sea heaved by the infernal tides of malignity. Deep hatred to Christ and His disciples prompted them to rise early on this

Sabbath morning in order to watch their conduct, hoping to detect some fault, "that they might accuse Him." Luke gives us to understand that this malice grew to a passion which overstepped all bounds; "they were filled with madness;" and Matthew says, "they held a council against Him how they might destroy Him." Were there greater Sabbath-breakers on the round earth that day, than were the Scribes and Pharisees, although they kept it to the letter? On the other hand it is implied that whilst Christ and His disciples did not pay much attention to the letter of the Sabbath, they truly kept it. Christ seemed to have worked unusually hard this day. "Great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all." Perhaps He did this in a measure to show these hypocrites that whilst the letter of the law required that there should be "no manner of work," that hard labour was not necessarily a violation of its spirit.

Mere formality has never been, and can never be acceptable to God. It is of itself a crime rather than a virtue. "Thou desirest not sacrifice else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering: the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." We here in England complain sadly of the profanation of the Sabbath on the Continent. We draw a comparison between Paris and London, in Sabbath sanctity, to the spiritual advantage of the latter. May it be so! But let us not forget that the closing of our shops, senate houses, and theatres, is not Sabbath-keeping. Men may be out of shops, and yet in the business; out of the senate-house, and yet in politics; out of the theatre, and yet in amusements. Cessation from the outward pursuits of business and attendance on public worship are not Sabbath-keeping. In pews men's brains teem with business ideas, and their hearts heave with the spirit of the market. Conventional Sabbath-keeping may be, and often is, moral Sabbath profanation.

IV. THAT TRUE SABBATH-KEEPING UNDER ALL ECONOMIES HAS ALWAYS BEEN MORAL WELL-DOING. "Is it lawful," says

Christ, "to do well on the Sabbath-day?" The vital question here is, What is moral well-doing? We can, I think, draw a satisfactory answer to this question from the narrative before us.

First: *We infer that well-doing requires us to hold the positive and formal in subjection to the moral and spiritual.* The positive and the moral seemed now to come into collision. The positive proscribed "all manner of work," but the moral now required a certain kind of work. There were two moral principles which now urged work:—*self-love* and *social love*: the one prompted the disciples to "pluck the ears of corn" to allay the cravings of hunger, the other prompted Christ to heal the "withered hand" of a diseased man. These two principles, as Butler has shown us, and our experience testifies, are innate. They are two imperative forces that our Maker has implanted within us; and they must be obeyed. They are not like positive enactments, contingent, local, temporary:—they are necessary and universal. They are "greater than the temple;"—greater than all ceremonies and institutions. They were before all positive enactments, and will live in the universe when all such enactments are obsolete. The Pharisees adhered to the positive, Christ to the moral; and the voice of unsophisticated humanity says Christ was right. He quotes a passage from the old Testament (Hosea vi. 6., 1 Sam. xv. 22). "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." The spontaneity of love, and not the coercion of fear; right affections, not ritualistic acts; the out-going heart, not the mechanical hand, are what He requires. To exalt the positive above the moral, the form above the spirit, is a sin: to do otherwise when there is a collision, and a collision is possible, is well-doing. Love is the royal law of the moral universe, from which all commandments take their rise, and to it all our positive institutes must give way.

Secondly: *We infer that well-doing requires that we should regard Christ as the head of all institutions.* "I say unto you that in this place is one greater than the temple." Jesus does not say, "I am greater;" but with much modesty,

“there is something” (the original is in the neuter gender), “greater.” Greater may mean either greater than the priests who served in the temple, of whom He had spoken in the preceding verse ; or greater than the whole system which the temple represented. Either is true. In the 8th verse His superiority over positive institutions is still more distinctly and emphatically stated :—“The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day. The SON OF MAN is a significant and glorious title. It intimates His common relationship and sympathy with universal man. He is not called the Son of a Jew or a Gentile, but the Son of Man :—equally related to us all. He is the head of all positive institutions. He can modify them, or annul them, or multiply them. Positive precepts, unlike moral principles, can be abrogated. Their appeal would create no vacuity in the universe, and would imply no contradiction. Christ could do away with the Sabbath if He pleased, or make it occur once in five days, or once in five hundred years, or in any other period ; but He could not do away with moral principle. He is not the Lord of them. He cannot abrogate the obligation of a moral being to speak the truth, to love God, and to act in all things righteously. Now we do well when we regard Him as the Head of all positive institutions. To follow Him, to imbibe His spirit, embody His principles, and regard Him as our Head in all things, is to do well. Follow Him, though in your path you tread positive institutes in the dust. “He is Lord of all.”

Thirdly : *We infer that well-doing requires that we should respect the claims of public worship.* “And when he was departed thence, he went into the synagogue.” Synagogues were places where the pious Jews assembled on Sabbath, and festive days, for the purposes of prayer, reading, and expounding the scriptures. Jesus attended these scenes of public worship, and once (probably on this occasion), officiated. Luke iv. 16. In attending public worship He has left us an example. Public worship does not rest for its authority upon positive enactments, it is a moral necessity. The social heart

of the devout man craves for it ; and the mutual blending of souls in worship tends to the spiritual culture and elevation of each. To attend public worship is to "do well." Men sometimes say, as an excuse for neglecting public worship, that they can worship God at home. My own impression is, an impression founded not only on observation but on the laws of mind, that he who neglects the public worship of God is not likely to worship Him at all.

Fourthly : *We infer that well-doing requires that we should always be ready to ameliorate the woes of men.* In the synagogue "there was a man which had his hand withered ; and they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day ? that they might accuse him." It is not necessary to suppose that this incident occurred on the Sabbath-day on which Christ and His disciples walked in the corn-fields. It was probably on the following Sabbath. "This man," says Bengel, "had either come thither of his own accord that he might be healed, or else he had been brought by others with an insidious design." Here was another opportunity these captious hypocrites thought favorable to their malignant ends. He meets them in two ways. First, *by argument.* His argument is based upon two points, which they would be compelled to grant.—(1) That if one of their sheep was in danger, they would seek to rescue it on the Sabbath. Self-interest, if not kindness, would impel them to make an effort to save the suffering and endangered animal. (2) That human life is more valuable than brute life. "How much better is a man than a sheep ?" Their pride and their religion would prevent them from denying this. Man has reflection—conscience—responsibleness—immortality. Man is better than a sheep. The cattle upon a thousand hills are not to be compared with him in value. From these points the argument is—if it is not wrong to save the inferior, can it be wrong to restore the superior ? Nay it would be breaking the Sabbath not to do it. "Is it lawful on the Sabbath-day to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it ?" The words imply, that the work of

helping a suffering-creature is well-doing ; and that every omission of the work, where the opportunity occurs, is *evil-doing*. He meets these cavilling Scribes and Pharisees—Secondly, *by a curative act*. “Then saith He to the man, Stretch forth thy hand ; and he stretched it forth and it was restored whole as the other.” Here is an illustration of three things :—(1) *A recognized capability of volition*. The command implies that the diseased had the power of *willing*. Man can will. (2) *The true law of volition*. The will of Christ ; not circumstances. If this man had yielded to circumstances, to ideas of his own weakness and infirmities, he would not have resolved. (3) *The value of obedient volition*. He obeyed Christ, and his volition sent blood, life, and energy into his withered hand. *Let us will what Christ commands*, and mighty will be our achievements.

Sabbath-keeping then is well-doing, and well-doing is what we have propounded. It is not moving by the letter, but living in its spirit. Listen to the illustrious Dr. Arnold, in his letter to Justice Coleridge on this subject. He says—“Although I think that the whole law is done away with, so far as it is the law given on Mount Sinai, yet as far as it is the law of the Spirit, I hold it to be all binding ; and believing that our need of a Lord’s-day is as great as ever it was, and that, therefore, its observance is God’s will, and is likely, so far as we see, to be so to the end of time ; I should think it mischievous to weaken the respect paid to it.

Germ of Thought.

SUBJECT :—*God's notice of Little Things.*

“And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his reward.”—Matt. x. 42.

“For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.”—Mark ix. 41.

“For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister.”—Heb. vi. 10.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Fifty-seventh.

IN treating this selection of passages, my object is to seize upon the great *principle* which is herein recognized. I shall not, at present, accept the texts as mottoes for a *charity-sermon*, though they might be usefully turned to that purpose. There is a grand moral and philosophical principle involved in these passages, and it is to the eduction and elucidation of that principle that our attention is now to be directed.

There is one preliminary point worthy of a moment's notice, viz :—“the cup of cold water” was a more costly gift in eastern countries than it is in our land; the simple reason being that it was in many cases more difficult to procure, and more precious to the traveller by reason of the excessive heat with which he was often overpowered. It is evident, however, that Christ regarded it as a *comparatively trifling* gift; he looked upon it as one of the *least* gifts that could be bestowed on a disciple, and yet not too little to attract the notice of an approving providence. Such being the case, we may naturally consider these passages as teaching GOD'S NOTICE OF LITTLE THINGS.

The word "little" must be understood comparatively. In one sense there is nothing trifling in the estimation of God. When Christ says one of these "little ones," He does not signify the meanness or insignificance of any of His people, but rather their comparative obscurity and feebleness. Understood in this light, the subject suggests :—

I. GOD'S INTIMATE ACQUAINTANCE WITH EVERY MEMBER OF HIS SPIRITUAL KINGDOM. "*One of these little ones.*" In order fully to appreciate the *minuteness* of God's knowledge, you must take the *telescope* in one hand, and the *microscope* in the other. What wonders are unfolded—unnumbered millions of globes, &c. ; system upon system. Microscope—a globe in every water-drop swarming with life ; a busy population on every *leaf*, &c.

Then lay down these instruments, and draw aside the veil of the spiritual world, and behold the countless ranks of intelligences—survey the stupendous whole, and then you will appreciate the touching simplicity of the words ; "*ONE of these little ones !*" This reflection should—(1) *Inspire a feeling of profound trust in God.* Am I a little one ? He *knows* me. I am not *too little* to be regarded. As He knows me, He will do *right* by me ! (2) *Inspire a feeling of profound reverence for God.* His eye is upon me ! Upon every passion that swells this heart ; every thought that flashes through this *intellect* ; every word that escapes these *lips* ; and every act done by this *hand*.

II. THAT GOD APPRECIATES A GIFT ACCORDING TO THE MOTIVE WHICH ACTUATES THE GIVER. This is fully proved by the various expressions in each verse :—"in the name of a disciple" ; "because ye belong to Christ" ; "ye have shewed toward his name." It is of vital importance to understand this principle, because—(1) *It casts light on the subject of good works.* If the gift of a "cup of cold water" is to be rewarded, then all the world might be rewarded, because there is hardly a man but would give such a gift to a fellow-

creature. Mark, however, the regard which is paid to the subject of motive : it is the *design* which renders value to the gift ; it is the *motive* which transforms the cup of water into a cup of blessing ! In the case before us a distinction is inferentially drawn between mere *animal kindness* and *Christian generosity*. In the one case the water would be given *without any regard to moral character* ; but in the other it would be given out of *love to Christ*. *Only a Christian can give from this motive* ; therefore the reward is limited to the followers of Christ *alone*. “We know that we have passed,” &c. Generosity is beautiful wherever it is exhibited ; but the generosity which is exhibited in heaven must arise, &c. (2) *It tends to prevent self-deception*. *Why* was that gift given—that deed done—or that word uttered ? “*Because ye belong to Christ*” is the true spring of philanthropy. How prone we are to deceive ourselves on the subject of *motive* !

III. THAT IN THE VAST ECONOMY OF THE UNIVERSE THERE IS NOTHING LOST. That “cup of cold water” is not lost. “God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love.” In His book the minutest details are made. This thought applies—(1) *To the sublime processes of physical creation*. In the flight of boundless ages, we are taught that not one particle of matter is lost ! In the ravages of oceans, the flow of the river, the crumbling of the mountain, there is nothing lost !

“Nothing is lost ; the drop of dew
That trembles on the leaf or flower
Is but exhaled to fall anew
In summer thunder shower.”

In the burials of ages, the vanquishment of armies, the mouldering dust of innumerable dead,—nothing is lost ! The least iota cannot be lost.

“The little drift of common dust,
By the March winds disturbed and tossed—
Though scattered by the fitful gust,
Is changed but never lost ;

It yet may bear some sturdy stem,
 Some proud oak battling with the blast,
 Or crown with verdurous diadem
 Some ruin of the past."

(2) *To the moral effects of the Gospel.* "My word shall not return unto me void." It will be a "savour of life unto life, or of death unto death." Poor ungodly hearer, let this momentous announcement fall heavily on thine heart! *A neglected Gospel will be a swift witness against you;* (3) *To all efforts in the cause of moral regeneration.* The humblest effort in the cause of Christ cannot be lost. It is a seed pregnant with immortal fruit. If that seed does not grow in the heart of the ungodly, still it cannot be lost, for it will grow into a chaplet or a garland to wreath the brow of the honest laborer.

Sunday School Teachers, hear ye this! Nothing is lost! "Weary not," &c. *Weeping parents*, hear ye this! All your efforts for the conversion, &c. *Spirits of the just*, hear ye this! All the kind words and earnest entreaties, &c. *What a motive for labor is here presented!* How it should check our murmuring, and inspire our courage!

Let us treasure up the holy lessons of the subject:—

(1) *To belong to Christ is the highest of all honors.* Are you "one of these little ones." (2) *He who belongs to Christ will be a giver as well as a receiver.*

Despisers of the *truth*,—oppressors of the *poor*,—blasphemers of the sacred name,—toiling laborers in Christ's cause,—givers of a cup of cold water,—hear ye this! Nothing is lost! It will not be lost! That cup of water will be found again! Christ will appear with it in His hand; He will *smile* upon it; that smile will change the water into *wine*, and as you drink it—"lost in wonder, love, and praise;"—you will exclaim, "Thou hast kept kept the good wine until now."

J. PARKER.

Banbury.

SUBJECT :—*The Two Brothers ; or, Earthly Relationship the Medium of Spiritual Influence.*

“Am I my brother’s keeper?”—Gen. iv. 9.

“And he brought him to Jesus.”—John i. 42.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Fifty-eighth.

OF the first two brothers who lived on this earth, the one hated and slew the other : and when arraigned before God and his own conscience, denied the obligation of fraternal care and affection.

Of the first two brothers mentioned in the New Testament, the one, having himself found the Messiah and come to some extent beneath His influence, hastened to meet the other and bring him to Jesus too. These brothers we may take as *representative men*. *Cain* is the embodiment of the spirit of hatred,—selfishness,—the world. *Andrew* of the spirit of love,—self-sacrificing zeal,—of Christ.

Let us dwell on a few observations suggested by the above well-known instances. Observe—

I. THAT EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS INVOLVE THE DUTY OF SPIRITUAL CARE. Relation, taken in its widest sense, if not, as some hold, the ground of all moral obligation, is certainly very intimately connected therewith. But, however this may be, no man can be a brother, a parent, a son, or even a master or employer, without being specially bound to care for his own.

None doubt for a moment that a man ought to provide for his “own household” in earthly concerns ; strange that in spiritual things, which are, indeed, inseparable from earthly good and infinitely more important, the obligation is comparatively so little felt !

If a brother, friend, or master, seeks not the soul’s good of those connected with them, who else can be expected to do so ? As neglect at the hand of a brother is felt to be

double injury, so should care for a brother's eternal interest be felt to be a double duty,—the duty of “a man and a brother.”

In proportion to the closeness of the relationship is the force of the obligation. We should seek the good of all ; but it is, alike, the dictate of nature and revelation to “begin at home.” Beams of spiritual influence should radiate throughout all the circles of earthly relationship. By example—by act—by speech—by prayer—by every right means should this duty be discharged.

II. THAT EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS AFFORD PECULIAR OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DISCHARGE OF THIS DUTY. God has constituted the varied relationships of human life for the purpose of promoting the moral and religious good of man. All the ways in which men are necessarily thrown together in the pursuit of the things of this life, may—without interfering with this design—be made opportunities to influence each other for eternal good. Every man is surrounded by an atmosphere of spiritual influence, in the which whosoever breathes, inhales health or poison : so that we cannot, whether we would or not, cease from influencing for good or evil those with whom we come into contact. But opportunity and power should be consciously and voluntarily used for good. If the elder brother “rules over” the younger, he should say,—“Let us go into the field” to admire the works of God—to meditate—to pray together ; not to tempt—to kill—and destroy. Alas ! how many families daily meeting, possessing common interests, extending mutual influence, have little thought of the opportunities thus given to lead one another to Jesus and salvation !

III. THAT ACCORDING AS THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST, OR OF SELFISHNESS IS POSSESSED, WILL THIS DUTY BE FULFILLED OR NEGLECTED. Sin, whose essence is *selfishness*, is a severing principle. Hence envy, hatred, divisions. Religious differences even, without Christ's spirit, often sever brotherly

sympathies. The first murder was connected with religious rites. "He that hateth his brother is a murderer." But Christ's spirit is a spirit of love and brotherly unity. To come ourselves to Christ, to be imbued with His spirit, is the necessary condition and the all powerful incentive to this duty. This also shall prevent a "falling out by the way."

IV. THAT CONCERNING THE PERFORMANCE OF THIS DUTY AN ACCOUNT WILL BE REQUIRED. "And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother?" Vain will be every excuse for neglect. God will say unto us all, "What hast thou done?" Conscience will speak. "We are verily guilty concerning our brother." On earth, in the judgment, in eternity, what questions will arise on neglected duties and misused opportunities; and how gladly will men evade them if they might! "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

V. THAT EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS ACCORDING TO THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY ARE USED BECOME AN ETERNAL BLESSING OR BANE. Cain went from the presence of the Lord. A wanderer through the earth, his race followed his footsteps, (Lamech verse 23), till the earth was swept away with the besom of destruction. To a man himself and to all beneath his influence, it is so. On the other hand, Peter was blessed in Christ, united in closer sympathy with Andrew, they lived in the promotion of the same great design, and in death they were not divided. Dives, in hell, dreads the coming of his brethren. In heaven, "Friends" are waiting to receive those who "fail" into "everlasting habitations."

B. DALE, B.A.

SUBJECT :—*Gospel Truth.*

“Then Agrippa said unto Paul, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.”—Acts xxvi. 28.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Fifty-ninth.

PAUL was emphatically a great man. He had an intellect that grasped the sublimest truths—a heart that loved his God and bled with compassion for his race. He lived as well as preached Christianity. His conduct confirmed the doctrine that his lips declared. He was a portraiture and a proof of the religion of Jesus. The peculiar estimation which he formed of the world was at once a result and an evidence of his singular greatness. His judgment was not carried away by show. The splendor of the world did not conceal from him its moral deformity. Standing upon an eminence unreachd by the mass, he took a view of the world, and with the law of God as his standard, he formed a calm and deliberate judgment of mankind. He deprecated the religion of the religious, pitied the ignorance of the philosophical, and wept over the degradation of the great. He estimated no man according to his birth, office, attire, or wealth ; but according to the real amount of Christian truth that lived in his heart and was embodied in his life. These remarks are suggested by the scene in which he appears before us in this chapter. Here the poet, the painter, and the sculptor, may find a subject worthy of the highest effort of their genius. He stands before royalty as a criminal undaunted and brave. Neither the anathemas of his own countrymen, nor the scowl of the world could crush that spirit of his which rose in triumph over all. He was in chains, and yet on the face of this globe there was no man more free than he ; his spirit exulted in a liberty which no despot could injure, no time destroy. An outcast in the world was *he*, and yet its rulers trembled at the majesty of his looks and the power of his words. Here, with his great mind filled with love to God and man, his cogent, rousing and eloquent

appeals made Felix tremble, and Agrippa exclaim—"Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

Now, we request you to observe, that the whole of this scene before us—the boldness and calm of the apostle—the tremor and agitation of Agrippa, are to be referred to one principle,—and what was that? Genius? Learning? Law? No, GOSPEL TRUTH. To a further illustration of the subject I shall invite your attention. The text leads us to notice—the *mighty energy*, the *sublime aim*, the *practical method*, and the *solemn failure* of Gospel truth.

I. THE MIGHTY ENERGY OF GOSPEL TRUTH. Its power is here displayed in two ways—in shaking the religion of the monarch, and strengthening the heart of the apostle.

First: *In shaking the religion of the monarch.* (1.) There is no task more difficult than that of destroying a man's faith in his own religion. Man has a religious nature—a nature made for God, and every opinion that he has entertained on religion, he holds with more than an iron grasp. It is easier to argue a man out of anything than out of his religious creed—he has often given up his *home, friends, and life* for this. (2) But while it is thus difficult for men in general to exchange their creeds, it was so especially with a Jew. The attachment of a Jew to his religion is proverbial. No religion, Christianity excepted, ever took such a hold upon the human mind as Judaism. Agrippa was a Jew. (3) But of all classes of men, no class would feel it more difficult to change their religion than *kings*. There are greater obstacles in the way of a sovereign changing his religion than to any one else. He is often a religious slave—the religion of the people must be his. Pride, policy, or fear would bind him to his old creed. (4) And yet more, add to all this, the circumstances of the new religion that was presented to him. It was neither popular nor respectable. The mass was opposed to it, and the high ranks frowned upon it with contempt. Agrippa had just heard his noble friend, Festus, charge the man with madness who was recommending to him

this new religion. Notwithstanding all these obstacles, such was the power of Gospel truth, that in a few minutes the creed of the king was shaken to the foundation. He seemed to feel that he was a deluded man, and he felt an inclination to embrace the religion of the apostle. "Almost thou persuadest," &c. Almost! Why, Agrippa, is it possible that thou art dissatisfied with the religion of thy fathers? What strange thing has come over thee? Shall Agrippa stoop so low, run such social and political risks, as to change his religion? Why, the philosophy of Rome will laugh at thee, and every breeze that sweeps over the Seven Hills shall be charged with ridicule for thy folly, shouldst thou assume the degraded name of Christian.

Here is a glorious evidence of the power of our religion! Blessed be God it is to triumph over all systems—it is to be the conqueror of all religions. We care not what may be their antiquity, their plausibility, their congeniality with depraved tastes. We care not though their principles be inwrought into the moral heart of man. Bring the religion of the Cross in fair contact with them, and they, like the mists of the morning in the summer's sun, shall vanish away. Like Aaron's rod, the Cross shall swallow up their enchantments. It shall dispel every error that darkens the human judgment, snap every fetter that enthrals the human soul,—it shall give to every spirit its right and freedom—the long lost inheritance of man.

Secondly: *Its mighty energy is seen in strengthening the heart of the apostle.* While Agrippa trembles, Paul is calm; there is a moral majesty on his brow. The king must have felt himself a babe in the grasp of this giant—a serf in the presence of this iron-bound freeman. What was it that braced up the soul of the apostle with so much unconquerable energy?—The same force that made Agrippa tremble—Gospel truth. The cloudy pillar of old which shone brightly upon the Israelites in the Red Sea, frowned in midnight upon the Egyptians—the former it cheered and guided through the waters, the latter it terrified and overcame with

dismay. So here, Gospel truth had a very different effect upon these two men. And does it not always act thus? While it overcomes the sinner with the terrors of conviction, does it not fill the Christian with joy and peace in believing? It makes sinners feel their weakness and believers their strength. It shakes the world, but establishes the Church. It is a system to pull down and build up—to uproot and to plant.

II. THE SUBLIME AIM OF GOSPEL TRUTH. What is its aim? To elevate man from the barbarous, to the enjoyment of social life—to stir the human mind to action—to awaken it to a consciousness of its own precious being, and high relation and solemn condition—to dispel its ignorance, correct its errors, remove its opposition?—It does all this, but its grand object is to make men *Christians*.

But what is it to be a Christian? This is the important question. Is it to be orthodox in creed? No! there are many wicked spirits profound theologians. It is to be regular in our attendance on religious ordinances? No! the Scribes and Pharisees, were so:—and our Saviour said “Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven.” Is it to be attached to the person, character, and ministry of God’s servants? No! Herod heard John gladly, but the vengeance of God overtook him even in this world. Is it conviction of sin? No! Judas repented, Felix trembled, and Agrippa was *almost* a Christian. What then is it to be a Christian? Paul answers the question—to be as *I am*. But what constituted Paul a Christian? Three things:—

First: *He accepted the atonement of Christ as the only hope of salvation.* How numerous and cogent were the arguments he employed to show that by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified. “For if” (said he) “when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the *death* of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life.” On the sacrificial death of Christ he grounded his hope of

heaven and acceptance with God. He disclaimed confidence in everything else. His talents, learning, and morality he thought nothing of :—the Cross of Christ was his all. “God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of Christ my Lord.”

Secondly : *He made the will of Christ the rule of his conduct.* “What wilt thou have me to do ?” was the first question he asked. He regarded Christ as his Ruler, his King, as well as Priest. He followed His directions—he obeyed His precepts—he cherished His spirit—he copied His example. Christ’s example was the revelation of law ;—to imitate that example was to obey His will.

Thirdly : *He cherished the love of Christ as the inspiration of his life.* How earnest is Paul ! He traversed continents, crossed seas, braved perils, and endured privations, to preach the Gospel. But what was the motive ? Love ! “The love of Christ constraineth us,” &c. He was so deeply impressed with the power of this love that at one time he said, “Though I give my body to be burned,” &c.

These three things made the apostle what he was : these, too, are the essential elements of a Christian. Do you ask me what is the worth of this name, what is the value of the object which it is the design of Gospel truth to confer ? *We cannot tell.* It is a “name above every human name.” A name that suggests matter for everlasting thought,—that comprehends within its ample range all the pure, generous, free spirits of men of every age and clime ; spirits that shall shine like stars in the kingdom of heaven for ever. A name that shall live in memory when the greatest names of earth shall be forgotten ; when every title that emblazons the page of heraldry shall be blotted out by the hand of time. A name with which is connected the sublimest privileges. Are you a Christian ?—then there is a close, an everlasting, though invisible, oneness between you, Christ, and every holy spirit ;—you live in the sympathies of the good, in the arms of redemptive mercy. Are you a Christian ?—then the great God is your father, Jesus is your brother, angels are your servants, and heaven at last will be your home. Are you

a Christian?—then you can look and claim an interest in all. All things are yours. How ardent, benevolent, and pious was that wish of the Apostle's—"I would to God," &c. A nobler wish than this never entered a human heart. From it we learn that a Christian in *chains* is *freer, happier, and nobler*, than a king upon his throne.

III. THE PRACTICAL METHOD OF GOSPEL TRUTH. How does this powerful truth attain this sublime object? By sentimental rhapsody,—bombastic phraseology,—dogmatic assertions,—noisy declamation? No. These may rouse the passions, but cannot convince the judgment; may beget superstition, but never produce enlightened piety; are more adapted to make Infidels than Christians. How then?—by baptismal water? This is an outrage on reason. By legislative enactment? There is no way by which coercion can travel to a man's soul, and touch the moral springs of action. Neither of these things separately, nor all conjointly, can effect the object. They who employ them for this purpose, betray great ignorance of the laws of mind and the doctrines of the Bible. What then are the means? Moral suasion. "Almost thou persuadest me," &c. This implies two things:—

First: *The existence of evidence to convince the judgment.* Persuasion, you are aware, is grounded on previous conviction. For example, before I could persuade an infidel to love and obey God, I must endeavour to convince him by evidence of the being, excellency, and claims of the GREAT ONE. Before I can persuade a sinner to seek salvation in Christ, he must be convinced of his own immortality, sin and danger, and of the existence, suitableness, and willingness, of Christ as a Saviour. Where these things are not believed—and in every congregation there is an immense amount of scepticism in relation to them—the minister has to argue, he has to present evidence to the judgment; and until he can fasten convictions in them as to the reality of these things, he cannot *persuade*. He has no ground upon which to stand—no

place on which to rest the great lever of the Gospel. That the Gospel has evidence to convince us of its truth is a fact as clear as noon-day. If it can only make Christians by persuasion, and if there can be no persuasion without a conviction of its truth, then it follows that every Christian, whether a saint in heaven or a pilgrim on earth, is a living witness of its truth.

Secondly : *The existence of motives to change the will.* Persuasion consists in the presentation of motives in order to change the will,—in bringing all the motives that can be gathered, in order to effect a change of heart and conduct. And how tremendous are the motives which the Gospel contains for this purpose ! Motives gathered from life and death ; time and eternity ; the resurrection morning and the judgment day ; the heights of heaven and the depths of hell ; the scenes of Sinai, and the mighty wonders of the Cross. Oh, the Cross contains a universe of motive in itself ! Every page of Gospel truth is charged with infinite motive to bow down the sinner's conscience and to change his will. The presenting of these motives to the mind is persuasion—is the means by which men are to be made Christians. This persuasion is a peculiarity of our religion. The religion of heaven needs no persuasion ;—the spirits there have only to know their duty in order to perform it. Other religions on earth are too false to depend on it. If the religion of the "false prophet" is to be propagated it must be by the sword ; if popery, by mystification ; if deism, by the construction of fallacies ; but our religion can only spread by its own force, it has a self-propelling power. All it wants is to be presented fairly to the mind in humble dependence upon that Spirit that has pledged to crown it with success. Was it not in this way that it spread in the first ages of the Church ?

IV. THE SOLEMN FAILURE OF GOSPEL TRUTH. "Almost" a Christian ;—only "almost." What was the reason he did not yield entirely to the Divine influence now brought to bear upon him and become a thorough Christian ? Not

because the Gospel had not sufficient motive to induce him to advance ; but because he did not *think sufficiently and rightly upon it*. You are conscious that the power of argument upon your mind depends upon the consideration you give it. An individual may ply me with arguments ever so powerful, yet unless I think upon them, they will fall powerless upon my soul. Suppose you had an undutiful son who had left your home ; his conduct had often grieved your spirit ; his absence had nearly broken your heart ; it clothed your days with darkness, it made you sad and restless through the night. Tidings reach you concerning the place whither he has gone ; and the gay, foolish, sinful, and ruinous conduct he is still pursuing. Your paternal sympathies are stirred to their very depths ; you enter your private room, you resolve to address a letter to your undutiful, though much beloved boy. Into that epistle you throw all the pathos of a parent's heart, and all the arguments that paternal love could form, to induce him to return to your bosom and home. After you have written your letter you show it to the dear partner of your life, and the mother of your son. She returns it with a full heart, and says, If anything will move him this letter will. Now on what does the success of that letter depend ?—Not on its being sent ; not on its being put into the hands of your son ; nor even on his reading it ; but on his thinking properly upon it, thinking upon it as the expression of a father's heart which his conduct has wellnigh broken.

Just so it is with the Gospel ; it is a letter sent down from the Everlasting Father to His undutiful children, containing the most powerful arguments to persuade them to return ; and the great reason why it succeeds not is, because they do not think. Hence He complains of their thoughtlessness. "O that my people were wise !" Let men but think of these subjects,—think of them, &c.

But was this a safe state of mind for Agrippa to be in ? Did the Gospel by producing this influence do him any real good ? No, if he lived and died in this state the Gospel was an immense evil to him ; better he had never seen Paul or

heard of Christ. Brethren! are you almost Christians? Allow me affectionately to expostulate with you. Almost a Christian! Why you are resisting the ministry of the Gospel by striving against the light of your judgment and the conviction of your own conscience. *Almost a Christian!* Has the kingdom of God come so near to you and will you not enter? Have you heard the thunder and seen the flashes of justice, and will you not flee from the wrath to come? *Almost a Christian!* Why the load of responsibility on your shoulders is tremendous; as yet the many privileges you have enjoyed have done you no real good. *Almost a Christian!* you had better die a heathen. The nearer you are elevated to heaven, the deeper will be your fall. Methinks, if on the judgment day there be one visage more impressed with agony and despair than another, it will be that of the "almost Christian;" if there be one shriek more piercing, one wail of anguish more distressing amid the miseries of the lost, it will arise from the bosom of the "almost Christian." I have heard of many awful failures. The failure of your health is sad, the failure of your business is sad, the failure of your country in some terrible campaign is sad—but all is nothing to this failure. If the Gospel fail to save man there is nothing else.

SUBJECT:—*The Spiritual Infirmities of Man, and the Agency of God.*

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be heard."—Rom. viii. 26.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Sixtieth.

THERE is something very beautiful as well as instructive in the manner in which Paul describes in this chapter the work of the Spirit, first in operating on the sinner's heart and

subsequently in guiding, developing, and purifying the spiritual life.

The chapter reminds us of the Holy Spirit first *regenerating*, then *leading*, then *furnishing* us with evidence that we are the sons of God, and then *enabling* us to make use of this knowledge by *strengthening* us to call God our Father, and of His *abiding* in the Christian as an all-sufficient helper.

In connection with this verse let us consider—

I. THAT THE GOOD MAN IS SUBJECT TO VARIOUS SPIRITUAL INFIRMITIES. First: *Ignorance is one of the infirmities to which Paul alluded.* We do not mean ignorance in the ordinary use of the word, not the lack of common and requisite knowledge which we generally understand by this term. But a lack of acquaintance with God and the revelation He has given of Himself. We sometimes fancy that we have a tolerably complete theoretical knowledge of the word of God. But even on this, the lowest ground of Christian intelligence, how very crude and imperfect is our insight into the merits of the Bible, as a written expression of the will and history of the ways of God with respect to man! But if we pass from this merely outward and shell knowledge to the inner and spiritual revelation, we cannot but feel, beyond the power of language to express, the greatness of our ignorance of the *mind* of God. The holiness and power of Christ's precepts and life, the extent to which we may realize the presence and help of the Spirit, and the strength and reach of God's promises, are little thought of, and less felt, by the vast majority of Christians. We might easily extend the catalogue of points on which believers are grossly and culpably ignorant.

Secondly: *Doubts and fears constitute another infirmity in which the Spirit helpeth us.* We are continually agitated by doubts and fears respecting the Church, as to its peace if certain circumstances should arise which appear to us possible or probable,—as to the maintenance of the outward ordinances if *the man* should be removed upon whom the

chief burden now rests,—as to the issue of the struggle through which it has ever and anon to pass with some outward enemy. These and many such questions arise in every earnest Christian heart, and cause anxious but generally unnecessary forebodings. God will take care of His truth as He ever has done. The ark of God must not be touched by profane hands, and those who doubt its security are unmindful of the presence of the Holy Spirit who will guard from all harm, and more than make up for the absence of any human aid. Under all such circumstances the Spirit has removed the cause of our infirmity. He will divide the sea, or stay the sun and moon in their course, rather than allow the enemies of the truth to triumph. And the doubts and fears which we have allowed to harrass us for a time in seasons of personal affliction have been all removed by the Spirit breathing over our troubled souls ! “Peace, be still.”

Thirdly : *Inclination to fix our thoughts and affections too much on “things which are seen and temporal.”* The objects of sense have more hold on us than those which are unseen and spiritual. Although these spiritual things are infinitely more glorious and will have to do with our eternal well-being, yet in this world our thoughts and affections are fixed. Living in this world and dependent upon it in a great measure for our happiness we cannot but be drawn towards it in thought and affection. There is no harm in thinking of, or caring about, the things of life. The harm is in allowing these things to keep us continually fastened down to earth, in not seeking the aid of the Spirit, by which we rise to the bright and joy-inspiring feelings and thoughts which are to us foretastes of the rich feast of heaven. We could not of ourselves burst these fetters, or rid our minds of the burdens which press us so to earth. Much less could we attain to that spirituality of mind and enjoyment of Divine truth, which are earnestings of the Spirit and of the inheritance reserved in heaven.

Fourthly : *The reluctance we feel to engage, and the difficulty experienced in continuing, in well-doing, are infirmities.*

There is great reluctance on the part of many good people to engage in God's work. Feelings of delicacy or a sense of their own unfitness induces them to shrink from what they know to be their duty. It is the Spirit that guides our efforts, preventing us as he did Paul from engaging in works that would prove unprofitable, and directing us to spheres where labor is needed, saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us."

II. THAT AMONGST THE SPIRITUAL INFIRMITIES TO WHICH THE GOOD ARE SUBJECT, THERE IS IGNORANCE OF THE NATURE AND MODE OF PRAYER. "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought." The apostle selects this as one instance of the Holy Spirit helping us.

First: *We know not what we should pray for.* We can fancy some one objecting to this proposition and saying, "Prayer is a very simple and easy duty; surely I know what I need, and am able to ask for what I require." You may know what you *wish for* and what you would like to receive, but this is a very different thing from knowing what is *best* for you to receive. We need not remind you of the instances which are continually furnished of children asking for the bestowment of things which would prove injurious, or the removal of other things which are great blessings. The history of Christ's life will supply us with a sufficient number of cases in which those who had arrived at years of discretion evinced that they did not know what they should pray for. The request of Zebedee's wife and sons is repeated in one form or other every day by those who follow Jesus, and from Him they meet with reproof the same. "Ye know not what ye ask." Again, when James and John asked that they might be permitted to call for fire from heaven wherewith to punish the slight done to Christ, He, by the rebuke administered, shows that they knew not what to ask for. Paul, too, by his own error in prayer (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.) was taught that we know not what to pray for.

Secondly : *We know not how we should pray "as we ought."* We often ask amiss, and as a consequence receive not. We ask *absolutely*, when we should do so conditionally. Our prayers are frequently presented with irreverence. There may be reverential utterances on the lip, but the heart is cold and indifferent as to the character of the Being to whom we present our requests, and with respect to the prayers we utter. We ask amiss because our faith is weak. Earnest and devout Christians go to the throne of grace with a sort of misgiving as to God's power being sufficient to meet their case, or as if His willingness were limited. If any ask aright, that right-asking is the effect of the Spirit striving for us, and in us, enabling us to pray "as we ought." When our heart is enlarged with the earnestness of prayer,—when faith is strong, so strong that it raises us as far above the world and brings us into close fellowship with God and Christ, it is the effort of the Spirit dwelling in, and striving with us.

III. THAT THESE VARIOUS INFIRMITIES THE SPIRIT HELPS US TO OVERCOME. The Spirit maketh intercession for us "with groanings that cannot be uttered."

This supplies another view of the Spirit's work from any we had gained from the apostles. In them, the verse implies that the Spirit regenerates, instructs, comforts, and guides. Here it is said, that the Spirit pleads for us. In this chapter, and 1 John ii. 4, we are taught that Christ intercedes for us in heaven. Here another person in the Holy Trinity is represented as pleading for us. The differences between the advocacy of Christ and that of the Spirit, I take to be the following.

First : *Christ intercedes for us in heaven. The Holy Spirit pleads in us on earth.*

Secondly : *Christ is the believer's advocate with the Father. —The Holy Spirit is God's advocate striving in, and pleading with men.* But with the sinner, to convert him to God, and

the believer, to bring him nearer in sanctity and fellowship to our heavenly Father.

Thirdly : *Christ is in heaven preparing a place for us. The Holy Spirit is in the hearts of men preparing them for the place.*

IV. THE MANNER IN WHICH THE SPIRIT HELPS US TO OVERCOME OUR INFIRMITIES IS INEXPLICABLE AND EARNEST. "With groanings that cannot be uttered." This may mean—

First : *That the Spirit influences us in a way that is inexplicable.* We cannot understand how He affects and influences us. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The believer knows from the teachings of the Word of God and his own experience that the Spirit dwells in his heart and influences his feelings and life ; but *how* this power is exerted remains, and ever will remain, a mystery.

Secondly : *The phrase "with groanings that cannot be uttered" may mean that the prayers which the Spirit dictates in us are unutterable.* And does not every Christian find that his desires and feelings (groanings) cannot be uttered ? No language can express the intensity of our longings after the presence of God and Christ. There are feelings of sorrow and joy which words cannot reach, much less describe ; so there are spiritual agonizings and pantings which the spirit alone excites and allays.

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SUBJECT :—*The Scene of Our Saviour's Execution.*

"The place called Calvary."—Luke xxiii. 33.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Sixty-first.

A MAGIC spell and power rest over some scenes and places. The *home* where our youthful affections were first brought

into genial exercise, we remember with hallowed feelings. Places of *historic interest*, too, there are. The national mind of England will ever revert with peculiar pleasure to Runnymede, &c. There are localities, also, towards which we cherish a deep *religious regard*. The scenes of the Bible are especially interesting to every saint of God; but no part of sacred history is so suggestive of *pious thought*, and *heavenly consolation*, as that which relates to our blessed Lord. In the scene to which we are introduced by the words before us, we behold Him in the consummation of His earthly career; we see events which astonished heaven, aroused hell, and confounded earth. Let us draw near, then, to this divinely-honored place; the place where, be it said with reverence, we see Deity in conflict; "*The place called Calvary.*"

I. IT WAS THE PLACE OF UNPARALLELED SUFFERING. No alleviating circumstances were there to soften His anguish; but the *full burden* of the world's transgressions rested upon Him. None but God could save the world, for none but God could endure the wrath due to the world. What, then, must the meek expiring Lamb have endured? The darkened heavens, and the rended earth, gave tokens of sympathy with the suffering Saviour. But this leads us to another remark:—

II. IT WAS THE PLACE OF SINGULAR PHENOMENA. "And it was about the sixth hour," &c., verses 44, 45. That this was not any solar eclipse is evident from the period at which it occurred, it being at the time of full moon: from the length of the duration of this darkness, no total eclipse having been known to exist more than four minutes, and no partial eclipse more than two hours; and also, from the testimony of ancient authors on the point. From Calvary, then issued the most singular phenomena; for here was the cause of all these extraordinary events. Earth and sky put on their mourning habiliments, and creation groaned a *requiem* to its dying Lord.

III. THE PLACE OF THE MOST MOMENTOUS OF ALL ACHIEVEMENTS. Here, did God, even the Triune God, make known His most marvellous work,—“*His acts, His mighty acts.*” Here, we behold the mightiest moral transaction within the range of human, and not improbably within the range of angelic, experience. On the brow of Calvary was the price laid down for a lost world; the uttermost farthing of the debt was paid; man’s utmost hopes were more than realized; the “promised seed” there “bruised the serpent’s head.” But this suggests another thought, viz. :—

IV. THAT CALVARY WAS THE PLACE OF GLORIOUS TRIUMPH. Hear the conqueror, as he proclaims His blessed triumphs! “I have trodden the wine-press alone,” &c. Isaiah lxiii. 3-6. He met stern justice, and silenced her demands. He chained death in his own den, and all insignia of his dread power did he destroy. He arched over the chasm which intervened between earth and heaven, and opened the way to glory.

If Alma, Balaklava, Inkerman, the Malakoff, and the Redan are treasured words on many a household-hearth, because of the victories there won, and the home-joys there blasted; then, let Calvary be precious to the heart of every saint because of a Saviour’s conquest there. Let everlasting honors surround its name, and undying hallelujahs celebrate His praise.—“Lift up your heads O ye gates,” &c. Psalm xxiv. 7—10.

V. THE PLACE OF PARDONING MERCY. In the very agonies of death He absolved the thief, and took him to the courts above as a *spoil* of victory—a *trophy* of redeeming love.

VI. THE PLACE OF DEEP DEVOTION, AND OF ARDENT AFFECTION. All were not mockers and scoffers who drew nigh to see the Man of Grievs expire. “Now there stood by the cross,” &c. John xix., 25-27. Be it ours to cherish

the same faithful affection toward the Saviour, and to receive from Him similar tokens of love and care. "*Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.*"

J. F.

SUBJECT:—*The Cry for Vengeance Rebuked.*

"And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Luke ix., 54—56.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Sixty-second.

THIS, by Royal proclamation, is a day of national humiliation, on account of the terrible position of what England calls her "Indian possessions." National guilt is implied in the observance of such a day. The question is, Does England *feel* her guilt? if not, humiliation is a solemn mockery.

England, conscious of guilt! What intelligent, impartial man among us can believe it? What intelligent foreigner who reads our daily prints will say so? No! the impression of such men must be that, England, instead of being humbled on account of her sins, is elated with ideas of her own wealth, civilization and dominion. National self-glorification they find in the speeches of statesmen, the harangues of popular declaimers, the leaders of journals, the songs of every famed songster. England, may look humbly to-day, speak humble words before her Maker, but I fear humility is foreign to her spirit. There are certain current assumptions amongst us in relation to India, which are to me sad proofs of our national pride and arrogance.

First: *There is the assumption that Providence gave us India.* This is taken for granted even by some of those who make pretensions to independent thought. How *absurd*

the notion ; nay, impious ! A man enters your house by force, appropriates your property, makes yourself, wife, and children his bondslaves, to work only for his gratification and aggrandisement. Did Providence send that man on such a mission ? The idea is monstrous. It is blasphemy. England a century ago travelled five thousand miles away and broke into India, appropriated its possessions, and subjected its teeming population to her authority ; trod the rights of princes, aye, and the sacred rights of man in the dust ; and now she says, Providence sent her there. Providence indeed ! There are two Providences ; there is the Providence of hell, —the Providence of selfishness, oppression, and wrong ; and there is the Providence of heaven ; the Providence of benevolence, freedom, and right. Does the Providence of God send men on wicked missions ? Never. O Providence ! how thy sacred name has been profaned !

Secondly : *There is the assumption that we went to India for her benefit.* I do not say that England has not conferred benefit on India, although this is denied with much evidence by many ; but the benefit has been incidental, not intentional. Our object in going there is patent to the world ; it was mercenary and selfish—to drive a trade. Our aim was to extend our dominions, and to gratify cupidity and ambition, not to elevate its teeming population. Did England encourage missions in India ? Did she not exclude the Bible from her public schools ? She thought far more of the opium which stupifies the reason of a whole empire, than of the Christianity which is indispensable to the salvation of the world.

Thirdly : *Another assumption is that India has no right to rid herself of our dominion.* If Poland, Hungary, and Italy, were to make an honest effort to regain their freedom and independence, what noble nation under heaven would not yield them its sympathy ? Do not imagine that I say one word to palliate the enormities committed by the natives on our countrymen. I am horror-stricken at their fiendish outrages, and my heart bleeds at the groans of their victims.

But the Sepoys the other day you called your "gallant soldiers," and science and the Bible teach me that they are members of my race—that they are men. Hindoos and Mussulmen though they be, they feel oppression, they love freedom, and have their aspirations for independence as we have. As men they have the same natural sentiments as ourselves.

Fourthly : *Another assumption is, that our duty at the present crisis is to deal out punishment.* The cry for vengeance is raised by a worldly press which rules the thoughtless in Church and State ; and its harsh and unchristian notes echo through the land. Such a cry is worthy only of pagans. In the text we have the cry for vengeance, and the cry for vengeance rebuked. Let us examine both.*

I. THE CRY FOR VENGEANCE. James and John desired vengeance to descend on the Samaritans, &c., and England now desires vengeance on the Indians. Her cry is, Hurl your severest thunders into her heart, crush the wretches, &c. This cry for vengeance, whether it starts from individuals or nations, implies such serious evils in the hearts of those who raise it, as may naturally enough suggest the question, Where is the most evil?—in the objects on which the vengeance is sought or in the seekers? How much worse was the spirit of the Samaritans than that of James and John? How much worse is the fiendish spirit of the Hindoos than that which cries for vengeance? It is a fair question ; let us not be condemned too hastily for mootng it. It may be that the very spirit of vengeance which now burns in the heart of England is impelling these Hindoos and Mussulmen to their infernal atrocities. It implies—

First: *A perversion of the innate sentiment of justice.* The sentiment of justice belongs to us all ; it is the stamina and glory of our souls :—but its function is not vengeance. Do not confound vengeance with justice. The vindictive element

* This is the mere abstract of the discourse delivered at Stockwell Chapel, on Wednesday Morning, the 7th of October, 1857 ; the day of National Humiliation.

is purely animal ; you see it in the brutes. Selfishness, pride, and jealousy may cry for vengeance ; but justice calls for rectification. Justice never gets into a passion, never rages and roars. It is her nature to be calm and majestic.

Secondly : *It implies an utter ignorance of our own character.* We are a nation of sinners. We confess in our churches every Sabbath-day that we are “miserable sinners.” Is it then becoming in “miserable sinners” to assume the prerogative of judges of character and arbiters of destiny ? Are criminals that deserve hell to put on the ermine robe and take the awful bench ? O ! England ! if thou hadst thy deserts thou wouldst have been like Sodom and Gomorrah long ago. Read the narrative of the woman taken in adultery.

Thirdly : *It implies a forgetfulness of the retributive government of God.* There is a God that judgeth in the earth, and he hath said “Vengeance is mine.” Injured virtue can afford to wait, and she will never dare to assume the prerogative of God.

Fourthly : *It implies ignorance of the ethics of Christianity.* There are two facts which to me are axiomatic. (1) That Christianity is a law for humanity—for humanity not as it ought to be, but as it is. (2) That this Christianity is against all resentment and revenge. Let England renounce Christianity and adopt Paganism, or else cease to profane and misrepresent her by developing sentiments in her name antagonistic to her spirit. What depths of evil are there implied in this cry for vengeance. It is the same spirit that inspires these Indians in their atrocious cruelties—it is devil against devil.

II. THE REBUKE OF CHRIST. “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.” Observe three things—

First : *Men ought to understand the spirit that actuates them.* This is implied in the words of Christ. The spirit gives character to the act. “As a man thinketh in his heart

so is he. Men will be tried for the deeds done in the body.

Secondly : *Men are often deceived in the spirit that actuates them.* James and John were so deceived. They thought, perhaps, that love to Christ and justice stimulated this desire. Much in our country goes under the name of patriotism, philanthropy, and religion, which is nothing but *unmitigated selfishness.*

Thirdly : *That whatever spirit seeks the destruction of life is not of Christ.* The Son of man came not to destroy," &c. Any one can destroy. The senseless winds of heaven can breathe death into a population. The power to destroy is devilish, the power to save is Divine. An insect can destroy the life of a giant, but God alone can give life to a flower. I see no glory therefore in the work of destruction. If I honor man because of his power to destroy, let me honor the lion, the tiger, the earthquake, or the pestilence. "The Son of man," &c. I do not say that Christianity prohibits self-defence, nor self-defence by physical force. The principle of self-defence is instinctive, and what is instinctive is Divine. But Christianity does demand that whatever amount of force I employ in self-defence, I should neither violate the *law of benevolence*, nor the *sanctity of human life*. This is as clear to me as the doctrine of justification by faith. He who denies the one is as great a heretic as he who denies the other.

I know the fate of the men who speak as I have spoken this morning. They are denounced as puling politicians, sentimental, unpractical, and un-English. If it be un-English to despise the current sentiment of a thoughtless population—to respect the eternal principles of truth rather than those opinions which can be turned with any wind—to deal honestly rather than flatteringly with my country, then I am un-English. He is my friend, not who flatters me, but who kindly notes my faults. The flatterers of England are her greatest banes.

SUBJECT :—*The Benevolence of Christ's Mission.*

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."—John x. 10.

Analysis of Family the Two Hundred and Sixty-third.

THESE words suggest at once three ideas about Christ.—First: *That He existed before His appearance in our world.* "I am come." Whence? Plato entertained the idea that all souls had an existence anterior to their connection with the body. This may be true or false. But Christ's pre-existence is distinctly taught—John i. 1-10.—iii. 13—xvii. 5. Eph. iii. 3.—Phil. ii. 5-6—Col. i. 14-17. Secondly: *That His existence in our world is the result of His own voluntary determination.* "I am come." Neither we, nor any of our race can be said to have "come" into the world. We have been sent. We had no voice nor power in the question as to whether we should be, or not be, or as to whether we should be here or elsewhere—this or that. But Christ had this power. Psalm xl. 6-8—John vi. 38—2 Cor. viii. 9. Thirdly: *That His determination to come into our world was swayed by love for man.* "I am come, not that I might be tempted, but "that they might have life."

The subject to which we shall now give attention is—the Philanthropy of Christ's mission; and in illustrating this I shall make three observations :—

I. THAT THE OBJECT OF HIS MISSION IS CONTRARY TO WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED. Let us suppose that we are told, for the first time, two things—(1) That there is in God's universe a province of moral beings who had renounced their allegiance to their Maker, and who, for forty centuries had rebelled against His authority, spurned the overtures of His mercy, and persecuted the messengers of His love. (2) That He resolves upon visiting that province in a special and extraordinary way—going down in person to it. Having been informed of these two things, suppose the question were

propounded to us : What will be the object of His mission ? We think that the answer would be prompt and decisive. We should say *punishment*. We should say that He would descend, robed in terror with the sword of justice. Two thoughts would urge us to the conclusion :—(1) That justice must some day show herself in connection with sin. She will not sleep for ever. (2) That mercy had been exercised sufficiently long towards that province. Four thousand years is a long period for mercy. All this applies exactly to our world ; and yet Christ comes “that we might have life.”

II. THAT THE OBJECT OF HIS MISSION WAS THE BESTOWMENT OF THE HIGHEST BLESSING ON HUMANITY. “Life.”

First : *He gives corporeal life*. Corporeal death comes by sin. I will grant three facts and yet hold this Biblical doctrine intelligently and tenaciously. (1) That death was in the world before sin. (2) That the human body like all material organization tends to decomposition. (3) That this globe is not adequate to the sustenance of a perpetual multiplication of the race. On one indisputable fact I base my faith : *that the continuation of a creature's existence, for a day, a millennium, or for ever, depends entirely upon the purpose of the Creator*. He has told us that we die because we have sinned. Christ came to restore corporeal life. It is true that you do not see the accomplishment of the purpose yet. The grave-yard is as still and quiet as ever. But the purpose of the faithful and almighty mind is formed, and it is virtually done. “One day with Him is as a thousand years,” &c. Christ has the key of every grave at His girdle. The trumpet will one day sound and the graves will be opened : “the hour cometh and now is when all that are in their graves,” &c.

Secondly : *He gives spiritual life*. Men are represented as spiritually dead. The “valley of dry bones” is not an inappropriate representation of the state of souls. Why is the depraved spirit represented as dead ? Another question will answer this : What are the ideas you generally attach to

death, (1) You say the extinction of some *principle*. You look at the corpse and you feel that that mysterious something which coursed through those veins, moved those limbs, beamed through those glazed eyes, is gone out. It is so with the soul. Love to God, the principle of spiritual life, which once inspired and worked those faculties, is gone out. (2) Perhaps *separation* is the idea. You look at the corpse and you feel the soul is gone from it,—the agent has left the instrument, and the instrument is therefore silent and motionless. The branch is cut from the root and is withered ; the star is turned from the centre and is in darkness. So it is with the soul. (3) Or perhaps you say *subjection*. You look at the corpse and you see that body which, when life was in it, subordinated the outward elements to its own health and vigor, now the sport of all. The sunbeam that cheered it, the air that heaved its lungs with life, all the gases that contributed to its energy, now contribute to its utter corruption. So it is with the soul. The outward circumstances in which it is placed which were intended to brace and strengthen it, subordinate it to their capricious forces and work out its ruin. (4) Or perhaps you say *loathsomeness*. That dead body, which a few days ago was so beautiful, is now offensive. Love itself says “Give me ground to bury my dead out of my sight.” So it is with the depraved soul. Its falsehood, vanity, selfishness, and carnality render it loathsome to all living souls. Do not I hate them O God that hate thee.” When you say, therefore, that the soul is dead it is no figure. Corporeal death is but a faint symbol and figure of this. Now Christ is come that we might have spiritual life. He is come to resuscitate the extinct principle, to unite it to its true source of life—God ; to invest it with a power to subordinate all outward circumstances to its use ; and to adorn it with the beauties of holiness. Let us look for a moment at this blessing in order to value the gift of Christ.

First : *Life is the divinest thing*. Wherever there is life, there is God in an especial sense. No one can give life but Him. Art has reached wonderful perfection ; it can mimic

life in the marble and on the canvas. The picture of Cowper's mother seems to have been a very perfect one : on the reception of it the filial poet exclaimed—

“Those lips are thine, thine own sweet smile I see.”

But as he looked at it in all the hue and form and expression of life, with her sweet eye fastening, as it were, upon her son, he felt that it was only a picture. No warm blood coursed through those veins, there was no motion in those limbs, no vision in those eyes ; and with sadness he exclaims again—

“O that those lips had language.”

Life is the emanation of God,—no creature can give it. Life is the divinest thing on this earth. Spiritual life is divine. Secondly : *Life is the dearest thing.* Every living creature struggles to preserve it. Sometimes I fancy that even the grass beneath my tread shrinks at the injury I inflict. It is so with spiritual life ; where it is, there is a constant struggle to preserve it. Thirdly : *Life is the mightiest thing.* The storm is mighty, but life is mightier ; the trees of the forest get strength from its fury. Gravitation is mighty ; but life is mightier. The power that chains the ocean to its bed, and binds planets to their centre, is conquered by the little lark that pours down her music from the clouds. Take life from her, and gravitation will bring her down.

Because life is thus the divinest, the dearest, and the mightiest, thing in the world, the great blessing which Christ imparts is called life.

III. THAT THE OBJECT OF HIS MISSION IS TO BESTOW THE HIGHEST BLESSING ON HUMANITY IN AN ABUNDANT DEGREE. “That they might have it more abundantly.” The idea I take to be this, that Christ will not only restore lost life to man, but restore it in a greatly advanced measure—that He will give back to man more than sin took away. “Where sin abounded, grace will much more abound.”

Let us to illustrate this, draw a comparison between *spiritual life in its original form in Adam, and spiritual life in its Christian form in the redeemed.*

First : *It is more abundant in the guarantees of its continuance in the Christian form.* In Eden, what a feeble thing it was, what a slight circumstance destroyed it ! We, if Christians ! resist temptations every day, a thousand times as strong as those which Adam yielded to. Take Adam and Paul. A little prohibited fruit is presented to Adam, and he yields. The greatest persecutions, obloquy, insults, and perils, are presented to Paul to turn him away ; and he says, "None of these things move me," &c. "I give unto my sheep," says Christ, "eternal life, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands."

Secondly : *It is more abundant in the amount of benevolent inspiration in the Christian form.* The circumstance that Adam, to excuse his own guilty act, referred the blame to the partner of his life, shows that his soul could never have been the seat of very broad generous sympathies. It is contrary to the laws of mind to suppose that the soul passes at a bound from broad benevolent sympathies to the meanest selfishness. Compare with this the benevolent sympathies which Christianity gives. On one occasion, Peter came to Christ, (Matt. xviii. 22), and said, "How often shall a man sin against me and I forgive him—seven times ?" The apostle, no doubt, thought this marvellously generous,—but Christ said, "seventy times seven," *i. e.*, there is to be no limit. Take Stephen when dying.

Thirdly : *It is more abundant to the honors it inherits in the Christian form.* I know not what honors man might have inherited if he had retained his innocence ; no doubt he would have moved on for ever in a progressive course of dignity and blessedness ; but he never would, we think, have seen his own nature in personal connection with God. This we see. Who is in the midst of the throne now !—*a man*. Who will judge the world at last ?—*a man*.

Fourthly: *It is more abundant in the influence which it exerts.* Spirit life in Adam would not have been powerful enough to convert sinners. It had neither the argument nor the impulse; but in Christianity it has. "It casts down every imagination, every thing that exalts itself," &c.

Brothers, under what obligation are we to Christ! He is our life! What a test you have by which to determine whether the object of His mission has been realized in your case. Have you this life? How clearly does it point out what should be the grand aim of our existence! It is to give life.

SUBJECT: *Spiritual and Material Relationship.*

"There came then his brethren and his mother, and standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, behold thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. And he answered them saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked round about on them which sat about him and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."—Mark iii. 31-35.

"While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother?" &c.—Matt. xii. 46-50.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Sixty-fourth.

It appears from the parallel passages that Jesus was now surrounded by a dense multitude, (Mark iii. 20). and that in the breasts of many there existed the most malignant feelings. His mother and brethren apprehending danger from the perilous position in which He stood, made their way towards Him, in order, if possible, to rescue Him. We are not to understand by the language in the text that Jesus depreciated natural relationships, or that He had no regard for the claims of kindred. He was dutiful to His parents, He was

affectionate to His brethren. His filial sympathies were strong. In His dying hour His last looks were directed to His mother. He committed her to His most beloved disciple. "Behold thy mother," said He, intimating His desire that John should take the broken-hearted woman, and treat her henceforth, with all the affection of a son. But whilst the words do not teach that natural relationships should be depreciated, they do teach certain lessons in reference to natural and spiritual relationship.

The text teaches :—

I THE FACT OF SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP. Jesus here uses the words, "mother, sister, brother," in two very different senses. The one a natural sense, the other a spiritual sense. There are some beings whose connexion with each other is simply and entirely that of physical relationship ;—such are the irrational creatures around us ; and there some beings whose relation is exclusively spiritual ;—such are the angels in heaven. No tie of consanguinity unites them—"they neither marry nor are given in marriage." Man is capable of these two relationships ; he is united to his fellows by natural ties, and he may be united by spiritual affinities and interests. His natural relation, father, mother, brother, sister, unspeakably important and precious as they are, are only symbols of spiritual relations which he might have, and which he should cultivate. There are spiritual fathers, and spiritual brothers. Paul calls Timothy his son—John directs his letters to his little children. There is a spiritual family on earth, ever multiplying, of which Christ is the head, and all Christians are brethren. Spiritually, they are begotten by the same spirit, they have the same filial and fraternal instincts, the same family sympathies and interests.

The text teaches :—

II. THE GROUND OF SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP. "He that does the will of my Father," &c. Observe, First : *That*

ecclesiastical ties are not a relationship. Man may belong to the same Church, adopt the same policy, use the same ritual, and yet not be spiritually related. Secondly: *It is not a mere theological relationship.* We may hold the same creed, be zealous in obtaining the same faith, yet not be doing the will of our Father.

The text teaches :—

III. THE SUPERIORITY OF THE SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP. Natural relationship, our Saviour held as secondary to the spiritual. His disciples, for the moment, were more important to Him than His natural mother or His brethren. Wherein is the superiority of the spiritual over the natural ? First: *It is more close than the natural.* Strong is the tie of natural relationship. What sacrifices, for example, will not the parent make for the child at the dictate of this instinct. Notwithstanding this, it is not the closest ; it does not bring moral oneness. The closest union of man with man is the union of soul, and the union of moral sympathy with goodness, and truth, and God. Where this union is not, the connexion of man with man is only as the connexion of beast with beast—a connexion by gregarious sympathies.

It often happens that those who are united by mere natural relationship, are alien in heart, alien in soul ; there are husbands, wives, parents, sisters, living beneath the same roof, feeding at the same table, engaging perhaps in the same occupation, whose souls are as far off from one another as the poles. They have different mental homes and associates. But where there is spiritual relationship, heart is bound to heart and soul to soul, united spirits are alive to the same virtues, consecrated to the same service, have sworn fealty to the same king. Their affections gather round the same objects. The attachment of the Ephesians to Paul is an illustration. Secondly: *It is more delightful.* The Great Author of our existence has, in the exercise of His goodness, connected happiness with every relationship. With all natural relationships there are sources of happiness. But the happiness

springing from mere natural affection is often little more than animal pleasure, and it often changes into sorrow and distress. David's love for Absalom, which at one time was ecstasy, passed into anguish. How many children every day are breaking the hearts of their parents, and "bringing down their grey hairs with sorrow to the grave!" But spiritual relationship is happiness. It unites us to the good, to those who love us without feigned love—love us without dissimulation; to those in whom we can repose our utmost confidence, who mingle their tears of sympathy, and blend their songs of praise with ours. "Behold how good and pleasant," &c. Thirdly: *It is more dignified.* By natural relationship men are sometimes introduced into stations which are conventionally high and honorable in rank. Sometimes the circles are low, slaves, paupers, culprits. But in all cases spiritual relationship introduces us into the great family of God—makes us "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ;" makes us "kings and priests unto God;" enables us to call Christ our Brother, the Creator our Father, the Universe our Inheritance. Fourthly: *It is more extensive.* Natural relationship only gives us a small circle. The largest family circle is but very small compared with the generation, and the generation small compared with the whole race. But spiritual relationship introduces us to the good of all ages of the world, of all classes and grades. It unites us to patriarchs, apostles, prophets, martyrs. It unites us to "thrones, to principalities and powers." It unites us to the great congress of the good. Fifthly: *It is made durable.* Natural relationship unassociated with the spiritual is very evanescent. Many things destroy the affections even on earth. A mutual hate between those who are domestically related is, alas! of too frequent occurrence. Death, however, will inevitably dissolve all natural relationship. But spiritual relationship lives for ever. Souls united in doing the will of God are more firmly united than planets to the sun. From the whole we learn—

(1) There is no foundation for the doctrine of virgin wor-

ship. "My mother," as if Christ had said, "is nothing to me if she does not the will of God." This is the principle that should always govern our affections. "Do not I hate them" says David, "that hate Thee?" (2) There is but one legitimate principle in the Church of God which will bind you and them for ever.

SUBJECT :—*The Power of the Tongue.*

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue."—Prov. xviii. 21.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Sixty-fifth.

LIFE and death are of all subjects the most momentous. The love of one and the dread of the other are amongst the strongest feelings in human nature. All creatures are furnished with powers both to preserve and destroy life. In some respects, many of the brutes have power of destruction superior to that of man. He has nothing like the tooth of the lion, the talon of the eagle, or the fangs of the serpent. He is physically defenceless compared with these. But he has one instinct which he can employ for death or life which they have not, and which proves his superiority in the scale of being ;—the "tongue." Intellectual—spiritual—social—and political—life and death are in the "tongue." The idea is that a man may do immense harm or good by the tongue. What power is in the tongue of an advocate, a commander, a statesman, a minister ! Let us look at the proverb in three applications :—

I. TO THE CHRISTIAN IN GENERAL. First: *He prays with the tongue.* "Ask and ye shall receive," &c. "Take with you words and return unto the Lord." When the tongue is thus used as the expresssion of a devout and believing heart, it is indeed "the glory of our frame." Secondly: *He confesses with the tongue.* Pardon is made to

depend upon confession. "He that covereth his sins," &c. "If we say that we have no sin," &c. "I acknowledge my sin unto thee," &c. There must be a confession of Christ as well as of sin. "Whoso shall confess me," &c. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel," &c. Thirdly: *He converses with the tongue.* The tongue is to be used in "declaring the goodness of the Lord," &c. We are not to keep our experience to ourselves. "We cannot but speak," &c. "O taste and see," &c. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another," &c. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth," &c. Reprove, exhort, persuade, instruct.

II. TO THE PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL! Death and life are emphatically on his tongue. First: *The tongue of a true Gospel minister produces life intentionally.* It is both the intention of himself and Master. "I set before you life and death," &c. He declares "the words of this life." They that believe have life. What millions have been raised from the moral grave by the tongue of the minister! Secondly: *The tongue of a true Gospel minister produces death incidentally.* His words, in many cases, produce "the savour of death unto death."

III. TO THE SAVIOUR OF MEN. First: *This is true of Him as a Teacher.* His words are spirit and life. What life, intellectual and spiritual, His doctrine awakens! Secondly: *This is true of Him as an Advocate.* Advocates in courts of justice have saved the life of many a prisoner. But how many more lives, in a far truer sense, has Christ, by His advocacy, saved! "If any man sin, we have an advocate," &c. What life was in that intercession upon the Cross! "Father, forgive them," &c. "Him, the Father heareth always." Thirdly: *This is true of Him as a Judge.* He is the Judge. "Come" and "Depart" are the two words that He will pronounce at the last day. "Death" in its most terrible form, is in the one; and "Life," in its most glorious aspects and enjoyments, is in the other.

From the whole, learn the awful responsibility attached to *speech*. "If any man among you," &c. (James i. 26.) The tongue is the engine of hell or heaven—the channel of living waters or of deadly poison. What a testimony, Burnet, in the History of his own Times, gives of the incomparable Leighton. "In a free and frequent conversation with him," says he, "for twenty-two years, I never heard him utter an idle word, or a word that had not a direct tendency to edification." "A good man out of the good treasures of his heart bringeth forth that which is good, and an evil man," &c.

JOHN SIBREE.

Coventry.

Stars of Christendom.

GREGORY OF NYSSA.

OF the three great Cappadocians, who, towards the end of the fourth century, present the flower of a noble orthodoxy, Gregory of Nyssa may be regarded as the greatest. His brother, Basil of Cæsarea, excelled as a Church ruler, Gregory of Nazianz, the friend of both, as a versatile rhetorician, but Gregory of Nyssa as a thinker. He was born at Cæsarea about 331, of a noble Christian family. His father's name was Basil, his mother's Emmelia. He received the best education possible in those times. He appears to have early married a woman with the pious name of Theosebia, but he afterwards adopted the high estimate of celibacy which prevailed in his time. He does not seem to have been at the outset so given to godliness as his brother and friend; for, having for a while filled the office of reader in a church, he exchanged this for the business of teaching rhetoric to young folk. Gregory of Nazianz remonstrated, and our Gregory was so far wrought upon as to consent to re-enter the service of the church. He was elected with the concurrence of the bishops of Cappadocia to the see of Nyssa,

a small place in that country, and was ordained by his brother Basil about 372. There is extant a letter from Basil to instruct him in the difference between *essence* and *hypostasis*, which was probably written somewhere about this time. At this the ignorant modern man would smile, but in those days of subtile and cultivated intellect, such questions were regarded as paramount. As a distinguished orthodox bishop, Gregory could not remain unmolested during the government of the Arian Valens, brother of Valentinian the First, but was banished in 375. At the death of Valens in 378, he was recalled by Gratian, who was favourable to the Catholics. Basil died in 379. In this year, Gregory was present, with many other orthodox bishops, at a council held at Antioch. It is said that he was here commissioned to visit the churches of Arabia. Before doing so, he saw the death of his sister Macrina, superior of a convent in Pontus. On his way back from Arabia, he paid a visit to Jerusalem, which became the occasion of a letter dissuasive of pilgrimage thither.

In the year, 381, the new emperor Theodosius, an adherent of the Catholic faith, convened the second ecumenical council at Constantinople, to settle the doctrinal distractions of the church, and to consecrate Gregory of Nazianz as patriarch of Constantinople. This ceremony was performed by Meletius of Antioch, as senior of the Eastern bishops. Meletius died soon after, and many funeral orations were delivered, of which that by Gregory of Nyssa is the only one extant. In the discussion of doctrine which came on at this council, Gregory took the lead. He read before Gregory of Nazianz and Jerome his work in twelve books against the Arian Eunomius, which is his largest and best. It is said also that he was the author of the clauses relating to the Holy Ghost, which were at this council added to the Nicene creed :—"The Lord and the Quickener, proceeding from the Father, with the Father and the Son together worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the prophets." Modifications were also at this council made in other parts of the same creed.

Gregory was afterwards present at several other councils in the same city. The precise year of his death is unknown ; but it was probably about the close of the fourth century.

Like his brother and his friend, he was indebted for his early theological culture to the writings of Origen, whose

influence on his theology may be distinctly seen. Yet he was not a mere appropriator, but a discriminating and independent thinker, glad of hints from another, which like precious seed in rich soil, germinated and brought forth fruit.

Here then was a life spent in the investigation and teaching of Christian truth. The labours of Gregory of Nyssa and his associates, have not been without result, but have had wide influence, and have conferred great benefit on the Church. Much nonsense has been said and written of late years, in attempted disparagement of Christian doctrine. The ethical element of Christianity has been spoken of as if it could be separated from the truth of it. That man's nature is intellectual as well as moral, and that the two are inextricably intertwined, has, apparently, been forgotten. That there can be neither justice nor love where there is no understanding, is an axiom, but axioms are ever violated in controversy. Christianity will grow and obtain strength in proportion as it is apprehended by the intellect; and this is the distinguishing excellence belonging to it, that it addresses not one part of our nature only, but the whole of it; being the proper object at once of the intellect, the moral faculty and the affections. In Germany, men's minds are already weary of looking so long at one side of themselves and of Christianity, and a damaging re-action has taken place. A re-action has begun also in our own country. The Pharisee and the Sadducee are mutual parents. What is supposed by some to be "progress by antagonism," is often little else than a sickly alternation of these. But symmetry and balance are means and symptoms of health. The protest against dead formalism has now surely been uttered with sufficient length and emphasis. We have had enough of partial talk. If we would avoid a ruinous rush to the other extreme, the proper method is to be wise in time, and be just at once to our intellects and to the propositional form of Christianity.

The attack on Christian dogmatics has often been particularly brought to bear on that department with which Gregory's life was chiefly conversant, the doctrine of the Trinity of the Godhead. Ridicule has been employed on the terms which were invented by Gregory and his compcers to express the notions which they believed indispensable for the faith of their age. On the other hand, an unintelligent

evangelism, unconscious of peril, half loses sight of the genuine doctrine of the Triunity, which it uncomplainingly suffers to be marred and mutilated. Yet there was profound wisdom in the Greek fathers who contended that this doctrine was paramount. They saw that this was characteristic of Christianity, the very Acropolis of the City of God. The proper character of the Object of worship, the doctrine of Christ's person, and the doctrine of the Holy Ghost were involved in this. Hase says, (History of the Christian Church, section 106) that "Athanasius ingeniously and enthusiastically reduced all Christianity to the simple doctrine of the divinity of Christ." However great the enthusiasm inspired by such a view, it were unnecessary to suppose ingenuity, where common sense were sufficient. To rouse the Christian, requires an attack in earnest on his cherished home; to make him fight with skill, a dexterous enemy; but let him know that all is at stake, and he is unconquerable. The opponents of the orthodox fathers estimated as well as they, the magnitude of the subject of contention. The men on both sides assumed weapons, the safest for resistance, the sharpest for offence, and stood up in mustered might for the great pitched battle of Christendom, an intellectual and pious conflict, unsurpassed hitherto for the ability and earnestness of the champions and the splendour of the result. Compared with this, other doctrinal conflicts have been but skirmishes. The creeds of the victors come to us across the ages, like distant sacred chaunts of faithfulness and thanksgiving. This contest in the early centuries of the church was wholesome for her cause. The truth, thus contended for, became better understood; and this being clearly perceived, firmly grasped, defined by the logic of Greece, and set forth in the forms of her marvellous tongue, the result, achieved once for all, is handed down as the masterpiece of the Christian mind hitherto, the precious and glorious bequest of the venerable ancient church. No succeeding doctrinal controversy has had a subject of equal import, has been so thoroughly conducted, has issued in so decided a manifestation of truth, and so complete satisfaction. No other doctrine has been so carefully considered and elaborated or so well settled as the doctrine of the Triunity of the Godhead. Amongst the ablest of the honourable champions of truth and the winners of the inheritance, admiring and grateful Christendom will ever reckon Gregory of Nyssa.

Gregory's works consist of doctrinal and practical treatises, homilies on various parts of Scripture, sermons, biographies, funeral orations, and letters. Of the first, the most important are, the "Treatise against Eunomius," already mentioned, and "The Great Catechism;" which is a treatise of the manner of dealing with Jews, Pagans and heretics, in endeavouring after their conversion. The edition of this Father by Morell, Ducæus, and Gretser, 2 vols. fol. Paris, 1615—1618, is nearly complete, and was negligently reprinted in 1638.

W. C.

LITERARY NOTICES.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY. By RALPH WARDLAW, D.D. Edited by JAMES R. CAMPBELL, M.A. Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black. Three volumes.

THESE are the long-expected and much-talked-of posthumous volumes of Wardlaw's theology. We suppose that they will leave the author's reputation pretty much where they found it. The name of Wardlaw belongs to the history of theology, and is properly associated in the minds of most of our readers with the development which has received the somewhat curious name of moderate Calvinism. If theology must be developed after this regular fashion from the old scholastic root, the Church may wait a long time for a more respectable figure than this same moderate Calvinism. No divine of the school has possessed a more serviceable brain or a pen with easier paces than the Scottish doctor before us. Besides lecturing on the political relations of the Church in reply to Chalmers, he is said to have worsted the Unitarians of his country; he produced a Treatise on the Atonement which is regarded by some as standard, the last word of orthodoxy on the subject, a perfect form of conception and expression; moreover, he

brought forth an acceptable work on Infant Baptism, another not quite so acceptable on New Testament ecclesiastics, besides many other volumes, and hosts of pamphlets and sermons. We cannot wonder that such a man should be invited to nearly every theological chair in his denomination, but must rather admire the firm faithfulness of his life-long adhesion to the congregation and the academy which he served in youth. The bulky volumes before us are a fitting supplement to such a life—a worthy monument of his many years of reading, thought, and academic labour. To give the reader some idea of their contents and their arrangement:—there are three introductory lectures on such topics as the divisions of theologic science, the difference between religion and theology, the benefit of education for the Christian ministry, and human systems and confessions. He then proceeds to enter on the existence of a God, cause, and effect, final causes, atheism, pantheism, easily disposing in the usual manner of Hume, and lightly passing over Spinoza, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and Cousin. Next come the questions of the authority of Scripture and the evidences of Christianity, when Hume is refuted according to custom, and Gibbon receives a rebuke. He now returns to the Deity, and expounds the Spirituality of God, His Omniscience. Power, Wisdom, Goodness, Holiness, Justice and Truth, the first volume closing with the discussion, How far the true knowledge of God has been attained or is attainable by unassisted human reason, The second volume opens with the Trinity, the Sonship of Christ and the procession of the Spirit. It proceeds to the decrees of God, creation, the primeval condition of man, the origin of evil, discussing the theory of Dr. Edward Williams, to original sin, discussing the theories of Edwards, Payne and others, and to the connexion of Adam's posterity with the guilt of his sin. Next comes the treatment of the priesthood of Christ, atonement, sacrifice, the connexion of Christ's Divinity with His atonement, and the extent of the atonement. Then election and perseverance. Then follows a discussion on the locality and occupations of the soul of Christ between His death and His resurrection, then the resurrection of Christ, His ascension, glory, intercession and reign. This volume concludes with justification by faith, and the duty of the unconverted to believe the Gospel. The last volume opens with an inter-lecture on revelation, including inspiration. Then follow, in connexion with the end of the second volume, regeneration and Divine influence, repentance and sanctification. Next there is a refutation of Antinomianism. Then come Christian ethics, drawn from the Old and New Testaments, which, in morality, are regarded as identical, and the two great commandments and the decalogue are expounded. The whole concludes with death, the separate state, the resurrection, the general judgment, and the duration of

future blessedness and misery. Dr. Wardlaw rejects the *à priori* argument for the existence of God. He also discards the eternal generation of the Son and the eternal procession of the Spirit. His criticism on Dr. John Owen, vol. II. page 29, is an instructive instance of imperfect acuteness, we were about to say, of bluntness of intellect. He seems inclined to retain the expression, "Christ descended into hell." He does not decidedly reject the "germ" theory of the resurrection propounded by Origen, which he fathers on Watts! In the discussion of these and similar subjects, it becomes painfully evident that Dr. Wardlaw's acquaintance with the history of theology was very defective, that in particular he knew but little of the Fathers, and that little probably at second-hand, as little of the schoolmen, and almost nothing of the Germans, whom he sweepingly denounces with all the dogmatism of ignorance. Of course his style of theologizing does not approach the excellence of our old English divines, but even of those of our time one or two at least may be thought of as much superior to him. Quick and sagacious in a certain limited sphere, he seems incapable of transcending it. An unsatisfactory superficialness belongs to his way of thinking. His want of acquaintance with the speculations of the modern European mind will render his work powerless on such as having lost their equanimity are seeking a readjustment to bring back satisfaction and strength. The form of Christianity presented here is not that which can be held by the subtler intellects of the present age. These volumes will be of little use to the theologian, but they may be recommended to the beginner, who has money to purchase, and time to read, this extensive work of the Dwight of Scotland.

OF THE LIGHT OF NATURE: A Discourse by NATHANIEL CULVERWEL, M.A. Edited by JOHN BROWN, D.D. With a Critical Essay on the Discourse, by JOHN CAIRNS, M.A. Edinburgh: Thomas Constable and Co.

DR. JOHNSON, in his Dictionary, defines a lexicographer as a poor harmless drudge. The same definition might in these days be justly given of a reviewer. Yet even the reviewer has his diversions and refreshments. Wandering over the dreary waste of literature, he is sometimes tantalized by a title which promises fertility and delight, but turns out a mirage. Again he reaches a real oasis, with watersprings and the shade of palms, where he is greeted by a high-born cheerful damsel, Philosophy by name, saying with sweet music, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also. Such an oasis is this volume. We remember some months ago prophesying the resurrection

of Philosophy, spite of her stately funeral, Comte, Lewes and Co., undertakers. And indeed, here she comes again. Hardly, you will say, this is only her ghost, for the volume is a reprint. Well, she was always a somewhat spiritual personage, and can give good reasons for shewing in whatever guise. But who is or was Culverwel? A gentleman was called out from a party to speak to a Mr. Smith. Smith, said he, Smith, I think I have heard that name before. But Culverwel, Culverwel. We have heard of Richard Cumberland, Bishop of Peterborough, author of an *Inquiry into the Laws of Nature*, a book against Hobbes, and of Ralph Cudworth. But Culverwel? Sir William Hamilton, in that shapeless book of his—we speak corporally—his edition of Reid, page 782, note, says, “I was surprised to find an eloquent and very just appreciation of Herbert [of Cherbury]—for he it is who was referred to—by a learned and orthodox theologian of Cambridge—Nathanael Culverwel, in his *Discourse of the Light of Nature*, written in 1646, p. 93. [p. 128 of the reprint.] Culverwel does not observe the oblivion into which he has fallen; for he is a compeer worthy of More, Spencer, Smith, Cudworth and Taylor—the illustrious and congenial band by which that University was illustrated, during the latter half of the seventeenth century.” But Nathanael Culverwel was Fellow of the Puritan Emanuel College, himself a Puritan, and preacher in the chapel there. This may partly account for the “oblivion;” since his Puritans were probably rather more given to theology than to Platonic philosophy, and the prelatist party would be shy of a good thing out of Nazareth. We may hope that by this time Prelatists have grown more catholic, and Puritans more interested in philosophy. Dr. Brown and the Rev. John Cairns have rendered reading men service by reprinting an almost unknown book which is a priceless treasure, and we hope that the reception of it will encourage them to proceed with the author’s other works. This mellow book not only expounds a profound and baptised philosophy, an admirable antidote for the false “spiritualism” of our time, but affords proof of learning rare in extent even for those days. Here are innumerable quotations, not only from the classics, the Fathers, and the schoolmen, from Friar Bacon, Lord Bacon, Durand, Selden, Grotius, Salmasius, Hooker, but from such as Maimonides, the Spanish Averroes, the Arabian Avicenna, the Jesuit Suarez, Cardano, Zabarella, Picus of Mirandola, and the like. The style is of singular beauty, and abounds in expressions of marvellous felicity. We agree with Dr. Brown, that “Culverwel’s figures body forth abstract thought more accurately as well as more agreeably, than the most liberal expressions could.” This edition is dedicated to Henry Rogers, Esq., and is preceded by a preface by the Editor, which affords some interesting information respecting the Author and

his work, and makes a handsome acknowledgment of assistance herein from the Rev. Henry More, of Lowestoft, an accomplished and elegant bibliographer.

Mr. Cairns has furnished a valuable critical essay, in which, after pronouncing the work "a literary curiosity, a monument of philosophical genius, and a masterly discussion of the subject of which it treats, hardly surpassed in the course of British ethics," he admits that it is "somewhat immethodical," and arranges its utterances under three heads, the theory of knowledge, the theory of conscience, and the theory of faith. Dr. Brown thinks that John Howe, who entered Cambridge University in 1647, was an admirer of Culverwel, and says that "traces of Culverwel are to be found in John Howe's works." The philosophic Christian and the student of literature would do themselves injustice, were they to neglect this extraordinary book.

INDIA'S GRIEVANCES AND ENGLAND'S DUTY. A Lecture delivered on the day appointed for Humiliation and Prayer, Wednesday, Oct. 7th, 1857. In Union Chapel, Brixton Hill. By the Rev. JOHN HALL. London: John Snow.

FEW things on the "Day of Humiliation" were more humiliating to us than the sermons delivered on that day as reported in the various newspapers. With a few glorious exceptions all breathed the same spirit, and played upon the same strings of thought. The notes were, of course, popular, but very harsh, clanish, and imprecatory. But few attempted to sound the sweet, race-loving, and merciful notes which He, our Great Master, first raised when He sat upon the Mount and opened His mouth to teach the people. Moses was popular on the "day of humiliation," and he was preached, not Christ. Amongst the preachers who ventured to take the unpopular side on that day is the author of this eloquent lecture. He has shown the historical side of the question. The diabolical deeds these mutineers are now perpetrating are but the measuring back to England the exact kind of suffering which England, under Clive and Hastings, had measured out to India heretofore. It will not do for us to preach retribution, otherwise we shall vindicate the infernal doings of these Hindoos. We thank Mr. Hall for this enlightened, honest, manly, and eloquent discourse. We wish he had adopted the thorough Christian principle, it would have prevented him from sanctioning a course of national conduct which after all he acknowledges to be wrong. What is abstractedly wrong can never be practically right.

COME HOME. By the Rev. W. AYLEN, B.A. London: John Snow, Paternoster Row.

TRACT literature is becoming more and more the literature of England. In these days of telegraphs, express trains, and intense mercantile stir, the people will not read either large folios, or even heavy quarterlies. Hence the importance of making the newspaper and the tract, which have become the necessity of English life, of a high character. We have an impression that even in the religious department of our tract literature there is room for great improvement. It is too simpering in its spirit, too narrow in its range of observation, too emasculate in thought, too destitute of genius and literary charms to command the attention of that class amongst the people which are the most reading, thoughtful, strong-minded and, consequently, influential. We gladly welcome, therefore, every tract of an improved type. Such we regard the production before us. Its heart-moving theme, its conversational style, its variety of incident and turn of thought, its sympathy with man, and its reverence for the GREAT ONE are amongst its excellencies. A little more sweep of conception and ruggedness of style would have made it more of a model tract for the age.

EXPOSITORY DISCOURSES ON THE BOOK OF EXODUS. No. I & II. THE FOURTH UTTERANCE ON THE CROSS; OR, THE SPIRITUAL SUFFERINGS OF OUR LORD. By T. THOMAS, Wellingborough. London: Judd and Glass.

THE author of these Discourses, like that of the Sermon noticed below, was a student at Homerton College. His mental qualities not only partake of the solidity and worth which are supposed to characterize the *alumni* of that institution, but would ensure him considerable distinction, even in a company of his average brethren. The two former discourses are the commencement of a series of expository Lectures on the Book of Exodus. They are exemplary of the kind, not encumbered with learned quotations, verbal criticisms, and logical formalities, but the rich results of considerable scholarship and earnest and independent thought. The work promises to give the spirit of Exodus; and judging from the present instalment our expectations are high. We sincerely hope that the sale will be such as to induce the author to continue the series. The last discourse demands careful consideration, containing as it does stupendous statements, advisedly made, but hasty assent to which were profanity. All the discourses manifest so decidedly uncommon

worth of head and heart, that the reader yearns for personal intercourse with the author, and is not surprised to hear that he is beloved and useful among his flock. But what meaneth this? Only that the fold of this Borig is in a corner, whereas it should be on the heights of Bashan.

THE REST OF HEAVEN, AN INCENTIVE TO WORK ON EARTH. A SERMON by the REV. JOSHUA CLARKSON HARRISON. Judd and Glass. This was preached in May last, before the London Missionary Society in Surrey Chapel, and is a respectable production, appropriate to the occasion. Yet there seems to be a mistaken conception lurking in the title. There is no antithesis in Scripture between the rest of heaven and the work on earth. If heaven is to be a condition of luxurious repose, then earth with all its toil and sorrow must be preferable. "The angels are all ministering spirits," and departed holy men are "like" them. The true antithesis is between the struggle against sin, the wearisomeness of toilsome and of partially fruitless effort, and the endurance of affliction, on the one hand, and perfection in character, service and condition on the other. The Sabbath of heaven, like that of earth, is a rest from inferior labour, conditional to a higher and nobler activity. We have here a painful illustration how piety may be vitiated by dissociation from clear and vigorous intelligence. The sermon, however, is pervaded by a quiet devout spirit, and makes us desire more of such matter from the same pen. THE CHILD IN THE WAY. A SERMON by JAMES ALEX. MACDONALD. Judd and Glass. Full of wise counsel, which should be pondered by parents. PHASES OF THOUGHT AND FEELING,—POEMS AND LYRICS. By J. H. POWELL. London: Partridge and Co.—The author of these rhymes appears to be a true-hearted son of labour, who is familiar with difficulties and struggles. We wish it were possible to give honest praise to his productions. We should rejoice to declare them "equal to Tennyson." But truth sometimes is, or seems, hard-hearted. The reader has already concluded that these "Poems and Lyrics" cannot be praised from the literary point of view. Indeed, however just the first, the second title is, in our judgment, a misnomer.

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